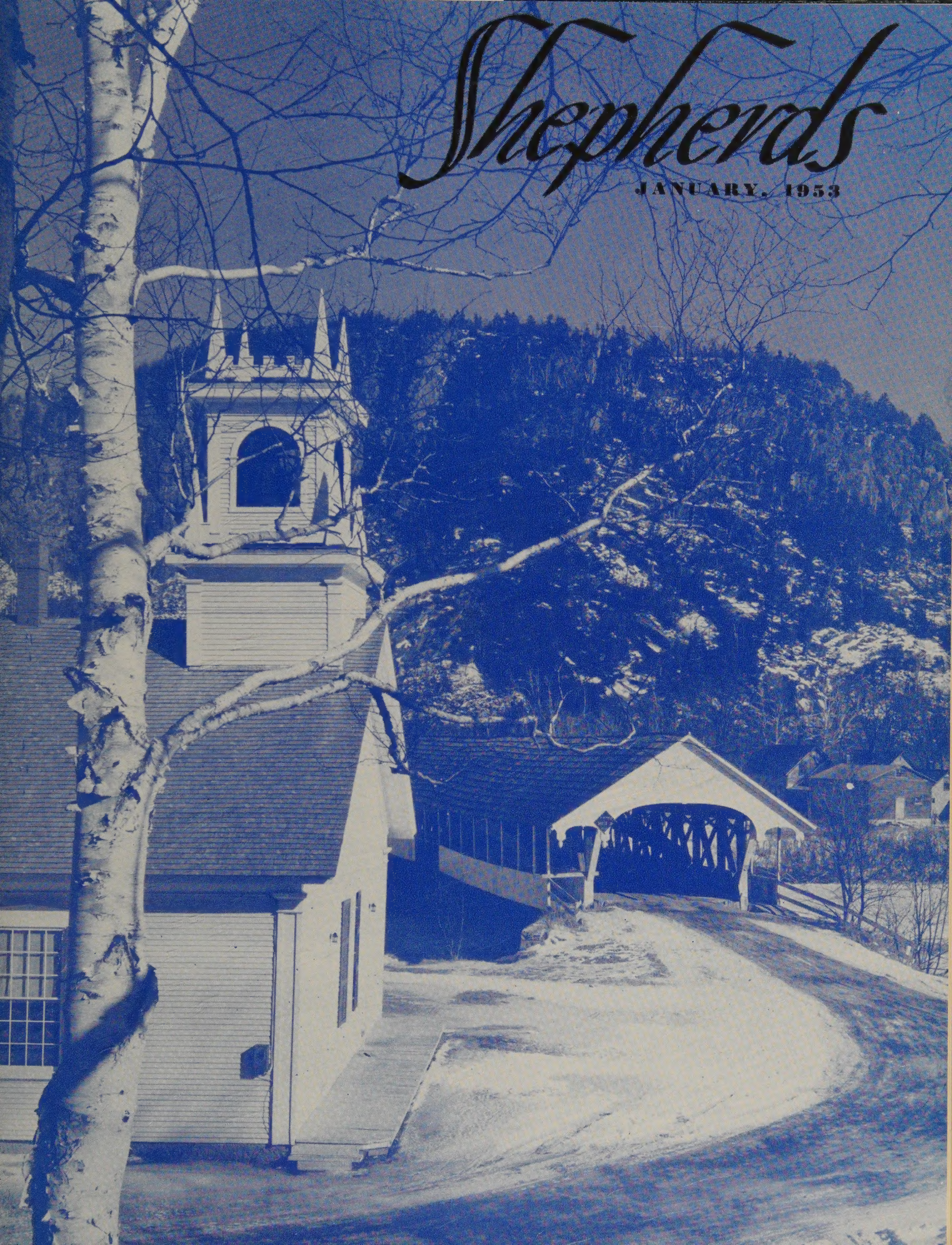
Shepherds

JANUARY, 1953



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The Ideal Christmas Gift That Comes All Year!

Shepherds

The Monthly Journal of Evangelism

Send *Shepherds* free of charge to the fellow-ministers of your community. Mail us their names and addresses, and we will send them the magazine with your compliments. An attractive card stating that the periodical comes as your Christmas gift will be sent to each fellow-pastor whose name you provide. Give them the gift that inspires all through the year. Be sure to provide us with the full name, denominational affiliation, and complete mailing address of your preacher friends to whom you wish us to send *Shepherds*. Air mail your list today to John G. Walton, Director of Promotion, TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 5, Tennessee.

SHEPHERDS

For Commission on Membership
and Evangelism in the Local Church
January, 1953
Vol. 7—No. 4

Geo. H. Jones, *Editor*
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TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue
Nashville 5, Tennessee

Chairmen of the Commissions on Membership and Evangelism in local churches, whose names and addresses are available, receive *Shepherds* each month free of charge. Pastors, District Superintendents, and District and Conference Secretaries of Evangelism are requested to report these names and addresses, giving the name of the church, charge, District, and Conference.

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Handy Order Blank for Tidings Evangelistic Literature

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_____ **Communion Covenant Sunday Service, Methodist World Mission of Evangelism** $2.00 per 100 _____
A new and inspiring covenant communion service pledging every participant's loyalty to the Methodist World Wide Mission of Evangelism in 1953

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Clear, concise, conclusive, this 2-color, 16-page booklet contains the now classic declaration of faith presented in the Episcopal Address to the 1952 General Conference. Should be in the hands of every Methodist.

_____ **What Every Methodist Can Do,** by Harry Denman. $2.00 per 100 _____
An instructive and inspiring leaflet emphasizing ways in which Methodists can deepen their spiritual life.

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Discusses the origin, beliefs, and membership requirements of The Methodist Church.

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A beautiful 2-color, 20-page booklet that tells the Christmas story in picture, scripture reference, and interpretation.

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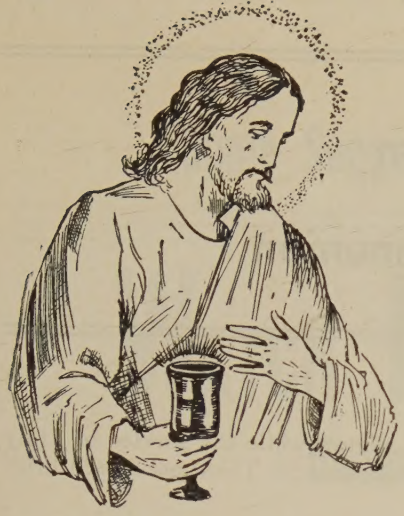


Use Special Service of Worship on

Communion Covenant Sunday

January 4, 1953

---or the First Preaching Sunday in the New Year---

From its beginning the General Board of Evangelism has promoted Covenant Sunday on the first Sunday of each new year. This has been in keeping with the custom of John Wesley and the early Methodists, and has been one of the most wholesome practices of Methodism down through the years. On the first Sunday of a new year, millions of people called Methodists have met in a special way to pray, to consecrate themselves, and to covenant with the Lord to live more Christlike lives.

The Committee of Fifty for the World Mission of Evangelism, composed of representatives of nearly every Agency of the Church, in its first meeting (in Washington, D. C., August 28, 1952), requested that January 4, 1953, the traditional Covenant Sunday for Methodists, be a Communion Covenant Sunday to be used as follows:

1. To promote the World Mission of Evangelism;
2. To be completely different from the dedication service that will be held during the Week of Dedication, at the beginning of Lent;
3. To emphasize the praying and witnessing phases of the World Mission.

How necessary it is that prayer be discovered afresh as a personal experience in the lives of millions of Methodists and that it be made to buttress the great program and efforts of the World Mission of Evangelism! How significant it is that this service should come during the Universal Week of Prayer observed by all the denominations!

Moreover, what could be more wholesome than for church members who call themselves Christians to determine deep in their hearts that they will strive to win a person to Christ during 1953? Only as this is done throughout the whole Church will 1953 be truly a Mission of *Evangelism.*

So a beautiful Service of Worship has been especially prepared for this Communion Covenant Sunday.

It is based on a Covenant Service which has been used with various slight alterations by Methodists ever since the days of John Wesley. It is prepared so that the congregation may take active part in it throughout. Even the hymns used in the service are significant. The first hymn, "Shepherd of Tender Youth," is the earliest Christian hymn extant and is attributed to Clement of Alexandria, about the year 200 A.D. The second, sung to the tune America and titled "Christ for the World We Sing!," might well be the theme song for every church throughout the entire World Mission.

At the heart of the Service of Worship, and preceding the partaking of the Communion, is a significant covenant card to be signed by the congregation. This card pledges the individual as follows:

( ) I will pray often for the World Mission of Evangelism, that the Lord will send more laborers into His harvest, that Methodists throughout the world may be deepened in their spiritual lives, and
that they may win more persons to the Lord Jesus Christ this year than ever before.

( ) I am determined, by the grace of God, to be a more faithful witness of the Gospel, both by deed and by word.

( ) I desire to bring at least one person to Christ this year and will make a conscious effort to do so.

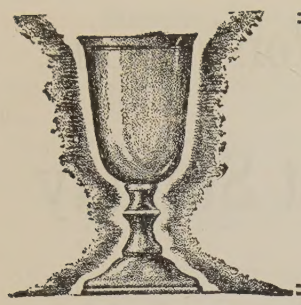
This covenant card is to be signed in duplicate, one portion to be retained by the signer as a reminder of his pledge and as an aid to help live up to it, the other portion to be laid at the altar as the signer partakes of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and thus pledges anew his love and loyalty to the Master.

The use of the Service of Worship and the Communion Covenant card will make for a most significant service, one that will afford every minister pleasure as he uses it and one that every member will long remember.

This Service of Worship (a sample copy of which was sent to Methodist ministers with December *Shepherds*) and the covenant card should be ordered at once from TIDINGS in ample quantities so that every person present may have a copy of each. Use the Order Blank in this copy of *Shepherds,* and AIR MAIL it immediately.

Pastors of circuit charges will want to hold this significant service in each church on its first preaching Sunday in January.

WORLD MISSION OF EVANGELISM
THE METHODIST CHURCH
1953



Acts of Devotion

During the Holy Communion

The following suggestions are made for our personal use during the sacred time of silence while the service of Holy Communion is being administered. Read and meditate upon the verse as the hymn is being played. Then make such brief silent prayers and petitions as come from your heart during your meditation.

"How rare it is to find a soul quiet enough to hear God speak."

1. **An Act of Quietness.**

Meditation: "Be still, and know that I am God." Ps. 46:10.

Hymn: "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

2. **An Act of Faith.**

"Lord, thou hast been our dwellingplace in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or even thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Ps. 90:1, 2.

Hymn: "O God, Our Help in Ages Past."

3. **An Act of Assurance.**

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isa. 41:10.

Hymn: "How Firm a Foundation."

4. **An Act of Penitence.**

"I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. . . . Then said I, Woe is me! because I am a man of unclean lips." Isa. 6:1, 5. Read over the general confession in the Communion Service on page 528.

Hymn: "Just as I Am."

5. **An Act of Cleansing and Forgiveness.**

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51:1, 2, 10.

Read the prayer for pardon and the words of assurance on pages 528 and 529.

Hymn: "Lord Jesus, I Long to Be Perfectly Whole."

6. **An Act of Drawing Near the Cross.**

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:5.

Hymn: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

7. **An Act of Intercession.**

"I pray for them: and for their sakes I sanctify myself." John 17:19.

Let us pray for our loved ones, for those who lead our country in these difficult days, and for all who are striving to bring God's kingdom of justice, good will, and peace.

Hymn: "For You I Am Praying."

8. **An Act of Petition.**

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7.

Repeat the Lord's Prayer.

Hymn: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

9. **An Act of Dedication.**

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1.

Hymn: "O Jesus, I Have Promised!"

10. **An Act of the Presence of God.**

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. . . . And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:18-20.

Hymn: "Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart."

11. **An Act of Peace.**

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27.

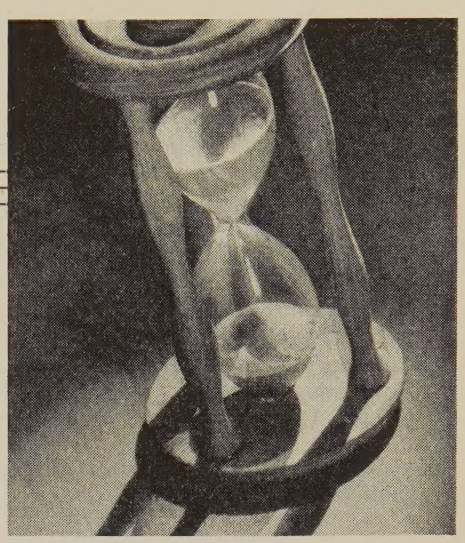
Hymn: "Peace, Perfect Peace."

(From an Order of Service used at the Hyde Park Community Methodist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, Lynn James Radcliffe, pastor.)

Some Suggestions for a Helpful

WATCH NIGHT SERVICE

December 31, 1952



There are significant spiritual values to be realized by churches which hold the traditional Watch Night Service on New Year's Eve. Pastors provide a blessing for their members when they make available a service to usher in the new year.

On New Year's Eve many members are going to stay up until midnight anyway. How much more fitting it is for them to attend a wholesome church social which closes with a worship service terminating at midnight than it is to usher in the new year with card parties, a dance, or other less wholesome revelries!

Blessed is the church whose pastor and officials plan carefully and prepare something special for Watch Night. This year Watch Night comes on Wednesday night, and almost exactly splits the week.

Many churches have a regular midweek prayer meeting on Wednesday night, anyway—many more than most people think. Such churches may magnify this prayer service at the regular hour by holding a social for their young people, for their new members received during the year, or for all their members and then concluding with a memorable, special service led by the pastor from 11:00 or 11:30 until 12:00 o'clock.

Moment of Awareness

There are many opportunities for variety and interest for New Year's Eve. As the old year dies and the new year arrives, it is a natural time for looking backward and forward, for looking inward and upward, for looking selfward and Godward. It is a moment of awareness—awareness of time, of God, of the world's need of religion, and of one's personal need for Christ. Before the Watch Night hour, 11:00 to 12:00 o'clock, arrives, a social gathering, a church or community get-together, with quiet games, food, fun, and fellowship, will prove interesting, helpful, and entertaining. Many members can get to know each other better only in such a way. Otherwise they are never thrown together.

New Year's Eve provides an opportunity for churches to give a few minutes in some special way to some desired feature, or to give recognition to certain groups of people or to certain accomplishments. In fact, there are so many worth-while things that can be done that it is well for a committee or a group of choice persons to be placed in charge of arrangements well in advance.

Effective Plans

We list a few suggestions, all of which are usable, and some of which you and your church will surely want to use:

1. *Testify.* Devote a few minutes to a period of thanksgiving, testimony, and praise. Thank God for His goodness. "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."

2. *Pray.* Devote a definite period of time to prayer. Pray for 1953 as a year of seeking and finding the Lord, as a year for the return to God and His righteousness in America. Pray in a special way for Methodism's World Mission of Evangelism in 1953.

3. *Quote Scripture.* Devote a period of time to reciting scripture on specified themes. More people like this than you realize.

4. *Sing.* Devote a period of time to the section of hymns bearing the designation, "The Changing Year," and found toward the back of *The Methodist Hymnal,* or use kindred hymns in other hymnals. These hymns may be sung, read by the leader, read in unison, read responsively, and used in a variety of ways to great profit. People love these hymns. They speak the people's language.

Honor Guests

5. *Honor New Members.* Have a period in which you honor your new members. Call the names and give interesting information concerning all those who have identified themselves with your church during the year. Have them present as honor guests. Have them stand when their names are called. Let them speak, each person one sentence, perhaps. Have them at the altar together. Let them join hands as they unite with the congregation in singing "Blest be the tie that binds."

6. *Births.* Call the names of those who have been born during the year. Let this be a carefully compiled list, so that no new son or daughter, grandchild, or brother and sister of a church member is missed. Have a word of thankful prayer and consecration for them.

7. *Marriages.* The same thing might be done with reference to those who have married during the year.

8. *In Memoriam.* Call the roll of the members whom we have loved and lost awhile. A poem, an appropriate hymn, or a prayer may be used. This can be one of the best parts of the evening to everyone.

9. *Know Your Leaders.* Strive to have present every person who serves on one of the church's major organizations: official board, trustees, Commissions on Membership and Evangelism, Education, Missions, Finance, the W.S.C.S., church school

officers and teachers, etc. Introduce each individual with his group.

10. *Significant Events.* Have a scribe, in a dramatic manner, read some "Leaves from the Notebook of 1952." Select the most important events in the life of the local church during the year.

11. *Know Your Church.* Have three brief talks: (1) "A Long Look Backward," giving high lights of whole history of the church; (2) "A Short Look Backward," giving high lights of year now closing; (3) "A Look Forward," giving plans, programs, prayers, and hopes for the future, especially for 1953.

12. *Candlelight Communion.* Conclude with a brief candlelight Communion Service. Usher in 1953 at the altar (and in the pew) on your knees.

Other Possibilities

If one or more of the above suggestions did not ring your bell, make plans of your own, or consider having a service in which 12 persons will read the 12 points of "What Methodists Believe," the statement that was made by the Bishops of The Methodist Church. This statement should be in every Methodist home and read by every Methodist. Place a copy in the hands of every person present (order from TIDINGS, $4.00 per 100). Intersperse these 12 brief statements with passages of scripture and hymns to match. You can select these from your own hymnal and Bible quite effectively. The subjects are God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, Man, Salvation, Christian Experience, Christian Perfection, the Church, the Kingdom of God, Divine Judgment, and Everlasting Life.

Above all, have a Watch Night Service—have everybody there, and make it vital.

Consecrate the New Year to the Glory of God

By Pledging Your People

to the

Methodist World Mission of Evangelism

through the

NEW COMMUNION COVENANT SUNDAY SERVICE

Based on John Wesley's Covenant Service
this new order of worship for communion

Is Excellent for Watch Night or for the First Preaching Sunday in January

$2.00 per 100

Rush Your Order Today!

Christmas Mails Are Slow!

For Use With This Service You Will Need

The Communion Covenant Sunday Card

A double card pledging the signer to
Pray for the Methodist World Mission of Evangelism
Participate in the Methodist World Mission of Evangelism

$1.00 per 100

1908 Grand Avenue **TIDINGS** Nashville 5, Tennessee

A Festival of Faith

in the

World Mission of Evangelism

--- January to Easter in Your Church ---

From Oxford, England, to San Francisco, California; from San Francisco, California, to Washington, D. C.; from Washington to the very city, town, or hamlet where you live, Methodist churches are aware of the fact that 1953 is the year of "The World Mission of Evangelism."

People have been asking, "What is going to happen?" "What are we going to do?"

The answers to these questions are going to unfold, month by month, as 1953 gets underway. Each successive issue of *Shepherds* will contain a part of the story. The Advocates and other periodicals of the church press will herald the news, the program, and the plans. The secular press will do likewise.

One thing is obvious: What we do, we do step by step. We don't do the whole program at once. "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." It is after we take the first step that we are ready for the second.

Moreover, there is nothing to be "handed down" or "up" that anyone or any church has got to do. Plans that are given will be suggestions—even what might be termed practical plans and programs. "Take them or leave them." But if you "leave them," be sure that you have better plans of your own. Make certain that you work your plans and that they work. For one thing is certain: God wants you and your church to work for Him, to win persons to Christ, to strengthen Christians in the faith, and to help make this a Christian world.

The Methodist Church is participating in a World Mission of Evangelism, and you are a part of The Methodist Church. God raised up Methodism, to begin with, to be "Christianity in earnest," to be an evangelistic church, intensely earnest in converting people and in spreading scriptural holiness throughout the lands.

From January to Easter

What should the first few months of 1953 find Methodist churches doing? When we come to think about it, the answer is simple.

God wants Methodism, you and your church, during the first few months of 1953—January to Easter—to do the best job of evangelism that you have ever done. In this World Mission of Evangelism your task is to win for God and His Christ your part of the world. Right where you are, you are to "let your light shine" and to be "witnesses" *to* Christ and *for* Christ. Your church, in all forms and phases of its work, is called upon to love the Lord more and to do more for Him than ever before.

In educational evangelism, in personal evangelism, in pulpit evangelism, in public evangelism, in spiritual life evangelistic development, etc., your church has a great mission to perform in your community. The next issue of *Shepherds* will give helpful suggestions along this line.

Build up Your People in the Faith

Probably the greatest opportunity that your church has in the nature of an educational, evangelistic, and spiritual development the year around is its regular Sunday preaching services. More people attend these services, and more often, than any other project that your church undertakes.

So why not make large plans at the very beginning of 1953 for your Sunday preaching services to be a Festival of Faith? What would be more helpful to your people, and more fruitful for your church, than a planned emphasis on the fundamental truths of Christianity, a series of sermons on great Christian doctrines, on "What Methodists Believe"? The Bible says: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. . . ." And the people called Methodists who can do this are too few and far between. Methodism needs such a Festival of Faith.

Therefore, use the Sundays from January to Easter to build up your people in the faith. It will be the best thing you can do for them. You will find it profitable, and edifying, and even easier than you think.

"What Methodists Believe"

Great sermons begin with great themes. Use the great themes of "What Methodists Believe." There are 12 of these themes given us by our Bishops in their Episcopal Address. Let your church place in the hands of your people this little booklet and other related materials (available from TIDINGS), while your pastor draws on the Bible to preach to you each Sunday on what the Bible says about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, etc.

Festival of Faith

There are 14 Sundays from January through Easter. The World Mission of Evangelism Committee urges that the first Sunday in January be used as a Communion Covenant Sunday. For this Sunday there is a Special Service of Worship and a special Communion Covenant card to match. (See this issue of *Shepherds*.)

Moreover, the General Conference requests that the first Sunday in Lent (February 22) be used as a great Day of Dedication in climaxing the Week of Dedication.

This is perfect. Exactly 12 Sundays are left for 12 great beliefs as outlined by the Council of Bishops in "What Methodists Believe."

So the schedule of Sundays and subjects, for the station church, would then be:

Sunday, January 4	Communion Covenant Sunday
Sunday, January 11	"We Believe in God"
Sunday, January 18	"We Believe in Christ"
Sunday, January 25	"We Believe in the Holy Spirit"
Sunday, February 1	"We Believe in the Bible"
Sunday, February 8	"We Believe in Man"
Sunday, February 15	"We Believe in Salvation from Sin"
Sunday, February 22	Day of Dedication, using materials furnished by the Commission on Promotion and Cultivation
Sunday, March 1	"We Believe in Christian Experience"
Sunday, March 8	"We Believe in Christian Perfection"
Sunday, March 15	"We Believe in the Church"
Sunday, March 22	"We Believe in the Kingdom of God"
Sunday, March 29	"We Believe in Divine Judgment"
Sunday, April 5	"We Believe in Eternal Life."

Shepherds, beginning with this issue, will have brief articles from 12 Bishops on these subjects. These articles (and other materials) will be available from TIDINGS as tracts for distribution to the people.

While these 12 great doctrines are being preached from the pulpit from January to Easter, put good reading matter in the hands of your church members. Consider these:

"The Methodist Primer," by Bishop Charles C. Selecman

"The Beliefs of a Methodist Christian," by Clinton M. Cherry

"What Methodists Believe" (Order one for every member)

"Some Essential Methodist Beliefs," by Tuttle

"What Every Methodist Can Do," by Harry Denman

"The Methodist Church," by James S. Chubb

(For these, and others, see order blank in this issue of *Shepherds*)

Church Attendance

While the pastor is preaching on these great themes from January to Easter, and while the people are reading on them during the week, what could be more helpful than a church attendance—**"See You in Church Sunday"** or **"Give God a Chance"**—campaign to get all members, friends, and constituents to attend church each Sunday? The funds spent on these church attendance materials will more than come back to the church in increased returns, and the time and energy spent will prove negligible compared with the benefits accrued and the joy gained from the results that will be accomplished. Even the **Attendance Record Card,** rightly used, pictured in this magazine, will bring increased attendance.

Circuit Churches

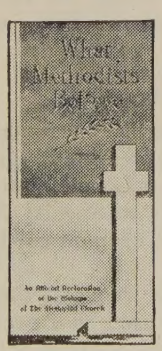
It is evident that churches which do not have regularly scheduled preaching services every Sunday cannot follow the 14-Sunday Festival of Faith, outlined above, as easily as station churches, but "where there is a will there is a way."

It is entirely possible for ingenious pastors, lay officials, and commissions on membership and evangelism, to work out effective schedules, plans, and combinations of services. Here are some suggestions for their consideration:

1. Let a circuit church have a preaching service every Sunday, with choice laymen being selected to bring the messages when the pastor is absent.
2. When circuit churches are sufficiently close to each other, let the members of one church visit the other on its preaching Sunday.
3. Let circuit churches work out an arrangement for union services during the period of the Festival of Faith.
4. Let the pastor preach on two or more of these subjects on the Sundays that he preaches in a circuit church.
5. Hold "special Festival of Faith services" for a week, using these great subjects.
6. Extend the time for the Festival of Faith. Let it run from January to Pentecost (May 24) or whatever length of time is necessary. These themes are ageless and dateless and offer opportunity for great doctrinal preaching and for edification of the people.

All Methodist Churches

Every Methodist church should consider the great values that will come from a Festival of Faith and make whatever local plans are necessary. Newspaper announcements and every media for advertising should be used. Let it not be done half-heartedly, but let it be entered into vigorously and with enthusiasm. The middle pages of this magazine constitute a poster that can be used in the vestibule of your church. Additional copies are available by using the order blank in the front of this magazine.



"What Methodists Believe"

from the 1952 Episcopal Address

A 2-color, 16-page, illustrated brochure, written in very readable and easily understood style, presenting the major teachings of "the people called Methodists." Should be placed in every Methodist home.

5c each; $4.00 per 100

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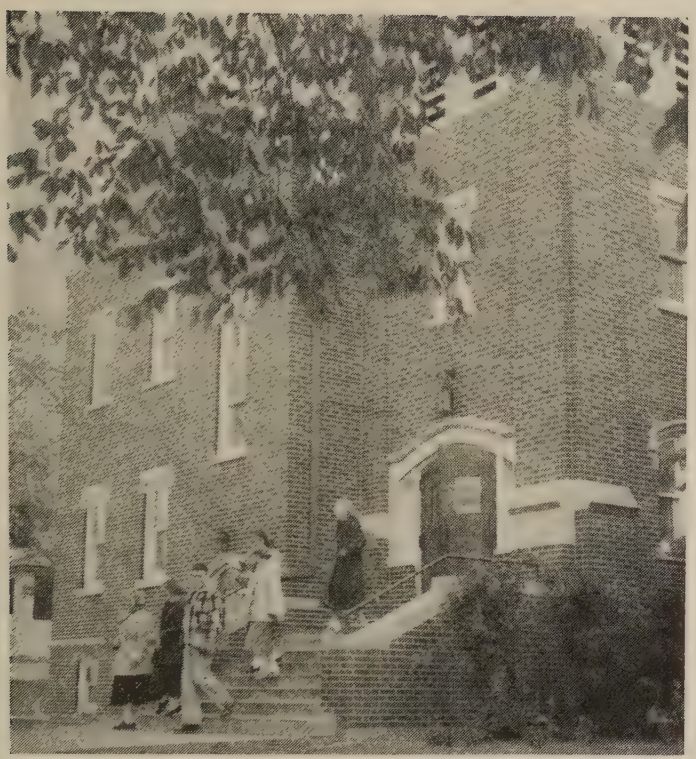
"A Wonderful Way to Start the Day"



Methodist Church, Marshall, Minnesota, Andrew A. Stave, Minister

MORNING WORSHIP

On Mary's return from camp at Frontenac, she continued setting aside a definite time in the morning for a worship period. "I wonder if other young people who were so deeply inspired at Frontenac are also continuing with devotions?" thought Mary. "The church should be open a certain convenient time of the day so that people could have an inspirational place to worship."

Mary presented this idea before her local Methodist Youth Council. Immediately plans were made:

(1) The church doors would be open from 7:30 to 8:30 A.M. every weekday.

(2) Adults and students of any denomination would be free to come and worship in quiet meditation.

(3) Devotional aids such as THE UPPER ROOM, *Power,* and other tracts would be supplied. Recorded organ music would be played the entire hour.

Only a few people appeared for services the first morning the plan was put into practice. At the end of a week's time the group had grown considerably. Because The Methodist Church is just across the street from the high school, the group consists mostly of students.

Some come to sit quietly and think; others, to read and pray; but all are inspired by the peacefulness of their surroundings. Whether one stays five minutes or a half hour he benefits from his talk with God.

Many students say, "This is a wonderful way to start the day—it strengthens me for the temptations I confront at school."

The plan is a success and everyone who participates wants it to continue. Other churches should realize the value of this program and encourage it in their youth groups.

UPPER ROOM HELPS YOUTH

I have heard from several of the young people, and they are finding THE UPPER ROOM very helpful. In fact, it is the first daily reading some of them have ever done. They all seem to appreciate the notes I write.

It makes me feel my time is well spent even though the notes take quite a bit of writing.

Mrs. Glen E. Roe, Wiola, Iowa

URDU EDITION OF UPPER ROOM

J. Manning Potts, Editor of THE UPPER ROOM, is shown below as he presents the newest edition of the daily devotional guide to H. G. Masih from Lahore, Pakistan.

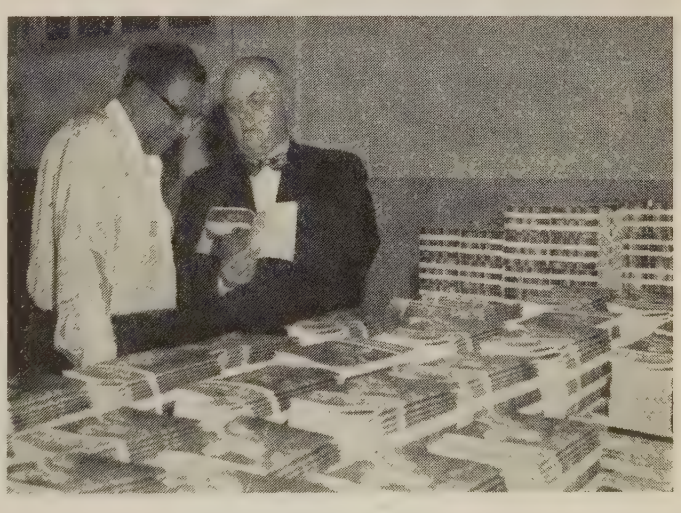
This new edition is printed in the Persian script of the Urdu language, and is a translation of the regular edition so that readers there use the identical Bible reading, meditation, and prayer used the same day by readers the world over. It is published for THE UPPER ROOM by The Bible House at Lahore. Urdu is the official language of Pakistan.

Masih, who works in the Finance Department of the Punjab government, came to the United States last spring as a lay delegate from Pakistan to the General Conference of The Methodist Church held in San Francisco, California. He is now working toward his Master's Degree in Education at Peabody and Scarritt Colleges, Nashville, Tennessee, and is on a Crusade Scholarship. He is a graduate of Punjab University and holds the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Training.

Masih is secretary of the official board of his local church, secretary of his Sunday school, and a local preacher. His father and grandfather were ministers. His great-grandfather was a Moslem.

Upon completion of his work in March, 1953, he expects to return to government service in Pakistan, but will transfer from the Finance Department to the Department of Education.

He has a wife and three children living in Lahore, Pakistan.



Call to Evangelism

in the

World Wide Mission of Evangelism

Adopted by

The Committee of Fifty

The year ahead will bring dramatic demonstration that "the Methodists are one people in all the world." For 1953 has been designated as Methodism's year of evangelism.

The call was issued by the World Methodist Council meeting in Oxford in 1951. Responses are coming from Great Britain, the continent of Europe, South America, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere in our world parish. It is evident that to our global Household of Faith the summons to evangelism is both familiar and foremost.

The General Conference, meeting in San Francisco, reached its high point in the adoption of a noble resolution on "The World Wide Mission of Evangelism." The action made this evangelistic crusade "an integral part of whatever forward movement the General Conference might adopt," and instructed all the Boards and Agencies of the Church to participate in this supreme spiritual undertaking.

The priority of this official "Call to Evangelism" is validated in the conviction of Methodists everywhere that evangelism is the most urgent need of our time; that never have men, as individuals and as nations, faced such desperate circumstances as now confront them, or known so deep a longing for a confident faith with which to meet the challenge of evil forces. The evangelism which will save the present age cannot be shallow. It must root in a personal knowledge of God and in commitment to His will; it must make itself felt in the social processes so that the will and the love of God may be more fully expressed through the agencies of our social order. Such Christian evangelism is based on firm and spiritual foundations long established in Methodist history and belief.

The Committee of Fifty, appointed by the General Board of Evangelism as authorized by the General Conference, transmits this "Call to Evangelism" issued by the World Methodist Council and the Methodist General Conference. We call upon all Methodists—whether laymen, pastors, District Superintendents, or Bishops—to join forces in this World Program of Evangelism to help win the world for Christ. We urge every local church to make intensive evangelistic preparation from World Wide Communion Sunday, October 5, 1952, to the Watch Night Service on December 31, 1952.

Significant evangelistic opportunities are to be found in the Advent Season and the traditional Watch Night Service consecrating the New Year to the glory of God. A Communion Covenant Service should be held in every Methodist church on its first preaching Sunday in January. The Lenten Season and Easter provide rich occasions for evangelistic emphases. Pentecost Sunday, May 24, which in the year 1953 is also Aldersgate Day, ought to be a notable date in the church year. The 250th anniversary of John Wesley's birth, celebrated on June 17, 1953, may well be used as the basis of an evangelistic program to inspire every member. The month of October, 1953, should witness the climax of this spiritual movement, with every local church in Methodism promoting the most intensive and fruitful program of evangelism ever undertaken. Throughout all this period, let the radio, television, motion pictures, newspapers, and all known media of communication, especially person-to-person contacts, be used to win men for Christ and His Church.

All of these plans are intended to supplement and strengthen the evangelistic efforts of Areas, Conferences, and local churches as they develop their own programs and spiritual strategy. We millions of Methodists could, under God, change the moral climate of the world in 1953—make it, indeed, the Year of Our Lord—if in all lands we would yield heart and hand to this high and historic summons to "offer men Christ."

Bishop W. Earl Ledden
Chairman, Sub-Committee

Members of the Committee of Fifty and some Staff Members who met with them in Washington, D. C., on August 29, 1952.

How to Build Your Congregation for THE FESTIVAL OF FAITH

The Festival of Faith, to be observed from New Year's to Easter, offers a wonderful opportunity for both pastors and people to deepen their spiritual lives through a careful study of the basic Christian doctrines. The Festival, described elsewhere in this issue of *Shepherds*, calls for preaching on great spiritual themes over a 14-week period.

If the program is to accomplish its purpose, however, the people must be present in the services where the doctrines are discussed. Nor is it too difficult to get them there. Various methods of increasing church attendance have been tried and proved by churches throughout the land. Two of the most successful of these methods are to be found in the **"See You in Church"** and **"Give God a Chance"** programs sponsored by the General Board of Evangelism and promoted by pastors and congregations everywhere. Of the many practical projects which these programs use to increase church attendance we mention here only a few that have proved outstanding in their spiritual influence. Carefully used, they will make the Festival of Faith increasingly vital.

One highly successful project is the *Fill a Pew Plan*. Under this plan, two-person teams are given the responsibility of filling specific pews assigned to them. During the week, members of the teams invite individuals to share the Sunday worship hour. On Sunday, the teams come to church early enough to welcome their guests as they arrive and to seat them in the pew for which the particular team is responsible. Each team works to see its pew filled for four or six successive Sundays. At the end of this period, new teams are appointed to carry on the obligation of visiting the inactives, calling upon prospects, and welcoming them to the church service. Through this system of rotation, many teams will personally contact many people in the course of the program. As a result, their infectious enthusiasm will persuade unchurched persons to find their places regularly in the services during the Festival of Faith.

Effective, too, will be the provision for a *Church Loyalty Covenant Sunday* when those present are asked to pledge their loyalty to the church by promising to attend its services. **Loyalty Covenant cards,** bearing the individual's signature, impress deeply upon him the obligations of his vows and thus influence him to join with those who assemble themselves each week at the Lord's house.

A *"See You in Church" or "Give God a Chance" visitation* will prove most helpful in bringing men and women to the worship services. In connection with this visitation the **"Give God a Chance" Covenant card** is invaluable. Pledging individuals to worship regularly every week and to read the Bible every day, the card is ideal for the visitors to carry into the homes where they call in behalf of Christ and His Church.

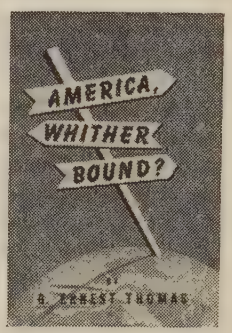
No period of the year is inappropriate for evangelistic calling. But, certainly, it is particularly in order during the Festival of Faith when hearts are strangely warmed as both individuals and congregations walk in the footsteps of the Master. Attendance registrations, using the helpful **Attendance Registration card** available from TIDINGS, will provide the names and addresses of prospects upon whom the visitors may call in connection with the Festival of Faith.

To encourage regular attendance at the services during this period, churches should use the **My Church Attendance Record card** providing space for each person to keep a record of his own attendance.

All this means, of course, that the local church must make itself known in its community. **"See You in Church"** and **"Give God a Chance" posters** placed in neighborhood stores, **window cards** displaying these cordial invitations in private homes, **stickers** on the windshields of automobiles, **movie trailers,** news items and advertisements in local papers, radio announcements—all help to make the church central in the life and thought of the community.

Where churches thus reach out through publicity and personal visitation they will win souls to Jesus Christ. From New Year's to Easter, keep your church in the forefront of the great Festival of Faith which will bring new life—and hope—to America!

For Your *Holiday* Reading



America: Whither Bound?
by G. Ernest Thomas

A 96-page book showing the reasons that America needs a spiritual revival.

35c each; 12 or more, 25c each

Preach on These Things
by Leslie J. Ross

A 48-page book of evangelistic sermons designed to bring individuals to the altar. Each sermon is aimed at revitalizing the faith of the church member as well as presenting Christ's claims to the unchurched.

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WHAT METHO

We Believe in God

Significant Statements

We believe in God because the fact and nature of His existence are well established.

Logic leads us to believe in God. As a result of his study of the universe, Dr. Cressy Morrison, one of America's most distinguished scientists, tells us that "Man Does Not Stand Alone." The scientific arguments all prove God's presence in the world, and reason affirms what science reveals.

Experience leads us to believe in God. We believe with General Eisenhower that in the light of what is happening in the world "only a stupid person can be an atheist." The evidences of God in human life are convincing.

Jesus leads us to believe in God. Often we accept truth which we cannot comprehend on the strength of our confidence in the witness to that truth. Jesus is such a witness for God. He believed in God. People seeing Him said, "God must be like that." He understood God and trusted Him. Jesus was closer to God than any man has ever been. He had the right to speak about God; and, since He qualified as an expert on the subject, He has the right to be heard and heeded. Belief in God is strengthened when we see Him through Jesus' eyes and follow God in Jesus' footsteps.

How can we strengthen our belief in God?

1. *By becoming better acquainted with Him.* When God is intimately sought His realness is unmistakable.

2. *By frequenting His House.* "Let us not forget the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is."

3. *By conversations through prayer* with the Head of that House. When they were praying together, "Jesus stood in their midst."

4. *By associating with His friends and working for Him with them.* "They that do His will shall know the doctrine."

5. *By knowing Jesus, His Son,* who said, "I and the Father are one" and in whose Person we can see God as did His disciples.

By every test we "believe that God exists and that He is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek Him."

—Fred Pierce Corson

We Believe in the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is essentially an experience. Judaism spoke of God's spirit, which meant God's action. The early Christians spoke of Jesus Christ and the Spirit without any clear line of separation. Today, we are aware that "warm, sweet, tender, even yet a present help is He." But, like all great experiences, this demands definition; and that is when we get the doctrine. We go wrong when we make too rigid what men have said about the experience. Almost inevitably, when we try to tell others what God's spirit does in human life, we either personify it or semipersonify it. We will do well to remember that we are talking about God and not someone outside of Him.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever," saith the Lord (John 14:16). Down through the years this has been the experience of Christians. The Comforter comes in when we are in need. He does not always give us the kind of comfort we think we want. He does not always remove the difficulty. The thorn in the flesh may have to remain, but the grace to bear it has been promised. In a sense, this is the heart of the Good News. What could be better than this? When things are too difficult, He will give us strength. When we simply cannot go on, He takes our hand. To every man and to every woman who will give Him His chance, He will enter the situation with strength and comfort.

That beautiful, courageous, pain-ridden spirit, Frances Havergal, who had suffered almost all her life, said one time, "Everybody I meet is sorry for me except myself." Then she added, "I always see my pain in the light of Calvary." To those of us who must walk the weary way, what a great word it is we have to speak. This is the kind of world where things happen that are not according to God's will. But there is nothing that happens beyond His concern. The Comforter never leaves us alone.

—Gerald Kennedy

ISTS BELIEVE

by
Four Bishops

We Believe in Christ

This is a dark world for many people. Hope and courage are needed today. Fortunate are those who are able to see the light which comes from the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In His life and words He revealed what God is like. He has been called "the Light of the World." The light which comes from His life is like that of a gem with many facets in which all races of men can see its glory.

The light of kindness shines from His life. He went about doing good. He was kind to children, to young people, to those in the strain of middle years, and to those in life's earthly sunset. The strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, even the sinners, were part of His concern. When men were nailing Him on a cross, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The light of character shines from His life. For forty days Jesus was sorely tempted but was triumphant in all of this experience. His enemies could not daunt Him. Neither the tyranny of Jewish legalism nor the arrogant power of Rome could crush Him. Men who have seen the light of His character have been inspired to follow Him and to endure all manner of hardship. His life was pure and sinless. Through the years His character has never been assailed. One man has said of Him, "Purest among the mighty and mightiest among the pure." He has become man's eternal contemporary.

The light of knowledge shines from the life of Jesus. He had a broad grasp of great truths that make for a better world. He was a child of His day as far as much of our secular knowledge is concerned, but He was way out in front in His grasp of spiritual realities. We have not yet fully explored the areas where the light of His teachings has gone. He reveals new moral heights and ethical standards for men to reach.

The light of faith shines from the life of Jesus. He knew that God could be trusted. He was dedicated completely to the doing of what He felt was God's will. He lived without fear. Thus we see in Jesus a man who never "cracked" under strain. Jesus is the supreme example of one whom no misfortune or enmity could break to pieces nor cause to grow weak with fear. The hope of our discouraged society is in people who do not break under strain. Jesus is the supreme example of a man who never "went to pieces." We, by faith in Him, can be strong also.

—H. Clifford Northcott

We Believe in the Bible

As Christians we believe that the Scriptures contain all that is necessary for our salvation. In the Bible God reveals Himself progressively and speaks through inspired seers, prophets, and writers.

We note the significance of this fact when we discover how God uses the experiences of men to reveal the power of His word.

Every age hears the voice of God in the language it understands. Through it each learns His purpose and redemptive power. This is quite evident as we read the various Bible passages expressing His desires for our future. Even in our present age the Bible speaks with relevance to our needs.

Many think of the Bible as God's revealed word for the individual. This is quite true, for the Bible speaks to all the moods of the individual. Religion is basically personal. But the Christian religion is a missionary religion, taking these personal experiences and sharing them in relationship to their social implications. The Bible reveals the working of God's spirit through these relationships and in history.

The Old Testament gives us the charcoal sketch of God's purpose for man and the community. In Christ we are promised a view of the finished picture. For God was in Christ revealing Himself. The Kingdom of God is the background for the personal experiences of the Christian. No man can be a Christian in a vacuum. The conception of the Kingdom as the rule of God in history indicates the need for the individual to make concrete this significant truth.

As we seek the formula for peace in our world we need to turn to the Bible. There we have God's word and pattern.

The Bible stands the same yesterday, today, and forever. It is the Rock of Ages for all seekers after truth. We who believe that the Bible contains all that is necessary for the salvation of man can make a major contribution to experimental religion if we hold fast to our belief in the Bible. Through it we can make our Christian religion practical and thus bring peace and comfort to all men.

—M. W. Clair, Jr.

Materials for Your

Festival of Faith

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Every minister will want this helpful packet

1908 Grand Avenue TIDINGS Nashville 5, Tennessee

Doctrine and Evangelism

by Vincent Taylor

in *The Methodist Recorder*, London, England

What Is Evangelism?

It is often defined as if it were a special art, the work of leading men to decide for Christ in response to a fervent appeal. There is truth in this way of putting the matter, but it is a very depressing definition for many. It fixes attention upon what we do, and easily persuades us to say that we have no special gifts for the task and dislike the technique. It is, of course, the Holy Spirit who leads men to decide for Christ. Our part is subordinate to this, but none the less important.

I would prefer to define evangelism as preaching the gospel with the aim, through the Spirit, of seeking a response. The desire for a response is vital, since otherwise we are only teaching or lecturing; and it is fully in accord with Apostolic practice, as it is illustrated, for example, in Acts 3:19, "Repent you therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." It is also significant that this way of understanding evangelism sets an immediate emphasis on doctrine. Peter's appeal arose naturally out of his doctrinal preaching.

Doctrine

But what is doctrine?

Doctrine, as I understand it, is nothing more or less than the content of the Christian message in the thought of our day. Paul and John are doctrinal just because they present the gospel in this manner. To us their teaching sometimes seems archaic—the Pauline use of legal terminology and the Johannine use of the term *Logos, the Word;* but only a little study shows us that they spoke the language of their time. I am not sure that I should like to separate too sharply doctrine from theology. But the two are not quite the same. Theology is the *ordered* treatment of doctrine; it raises the more ultimate aspects of the faith and invites us to study the history of Christian thought. I do not believe that our congregations mind an occasional excursion into the realms of theology, but I am sure they will welcome expositions of doctrine—not tedious arguments, but telling testimonies about the nature of Christian truth. They want to know what the faith is, and it is the business of preachers to tell them, plainly, tersely, effectively.

Questions

What, it may be asked, does doctrine include?

Consider, first, belief in God. Why do we believe in Him? Can we tell someone who questions us in the office or workshop tomorrow? Have we any reply to the blatant atheism of our day? As preachers we are simply damp squibs unless we have definite teaching to give on this matter. It is not a question of repeating the hoary arguments of the Middle Ages, which I am far from admitting to be useless, but of explaining the compelling reasons which lead *us* to believe in God. I would say the same concerning the question of authority in Christian belief. We know where a Roman Catholic looks for his authority and where a fundamentalist finds it. Where does a Methodist, or indeed any Evangelical Christian, find it?

All kinds of questions crowd upon the mind. What is the image of God in which man was created? What is sin? What is salvation? What is the significance of Christ? Wherein does the wonder of His incarnation consist? What is the meaning of His atoning Death? What is His ministry on high? Who is the Holy Spirit and what is His work? What is the importance of the Trinity? What are repentance, faith, grace, justification, sanctification, the Church, the sacraments, and the life everlasting? All these are evangelistical topics; they have electric power, so that in considering them men are compelled to make a decision as God confronts them in the manifold operations of His grace.

I often wonder what Methodists think of the preaching they so patiently endure. I am sure every preacher needs to abase himself before God. We are too anecdotal, too peripheral, too limited in our range. Alas! the hungry sheep look up and are not fed. We have to confess sorrowfully that some at least have ceased to hear us because they get so little.

Not long ago I went to hear an old student of mine. He conducted the service with all the dignity and the beauty which the colleges of today demand. But what would the sermon be? When he announced his text there fell on the congregation that wistful silence of which every preacher is conscious at times, for it was this: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2). I could see the congregation looking up, like plants turning to the sun. The substance was simple, but unmistakably direct. The preacher gave three reasons why Paul came to this decision. And the points went home. I have no doubt that hearers went away with these points stamped upon their minds, that they faced again the deathless appeal of the Cross. That was doctrinal preaching, and it was evangelistic preaching, too.

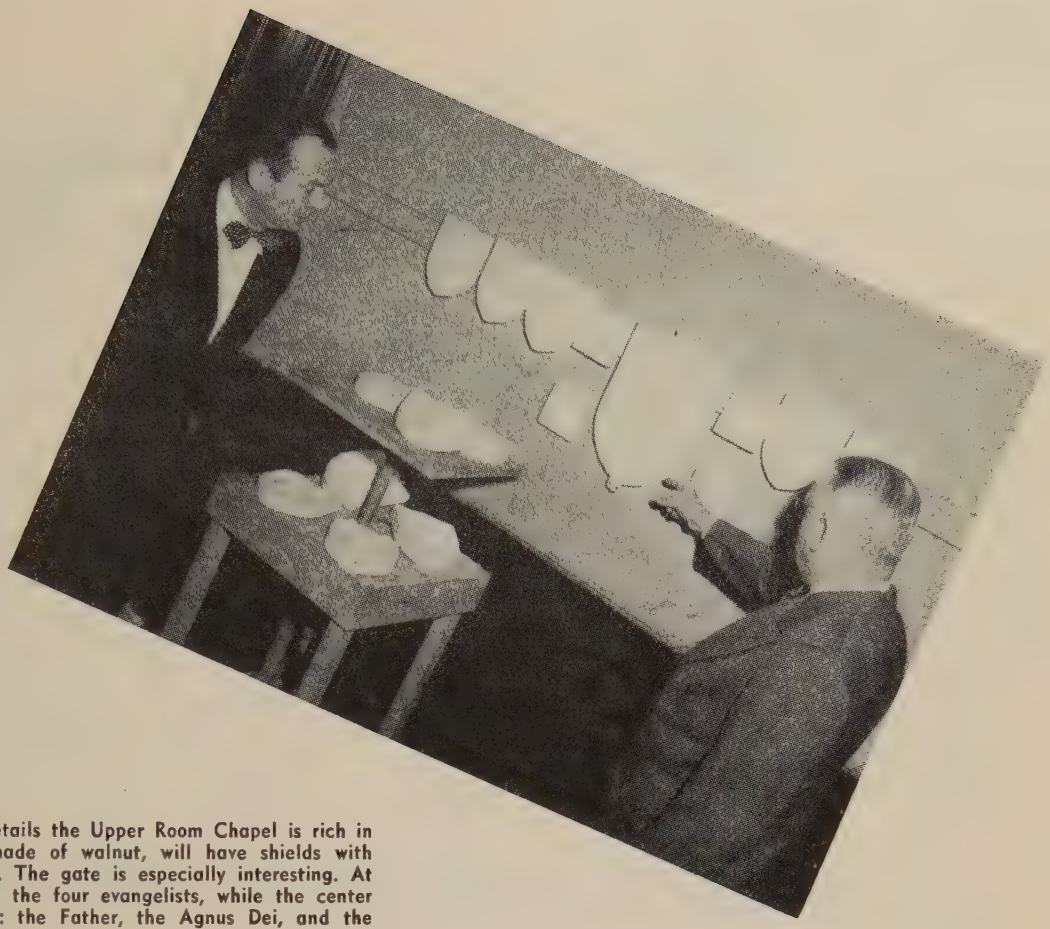
Suggestions

Dare I make practical suggestions?

It would be a good thing if once every three years we preachers wrote a short essay for no eye save our own on "My Gospel." How clearly this would mark our growth in thirty years! And how certainly it would provide a nucleus for our preaching! I think also we should aim at a terse, direct style, blue-pencilling the unessential, and studying the wonder of words. Did not Winston Churchill write his earlier speeches as many as six times? And above all, I think that we should preach our doctrines feelingly, even passionately, and this not as a matter of art (God forbid!), but because we are possessed by them. And will stewards help us? The Presbyterian elder leaves his minister alone ten minutes before the service—alone with God.

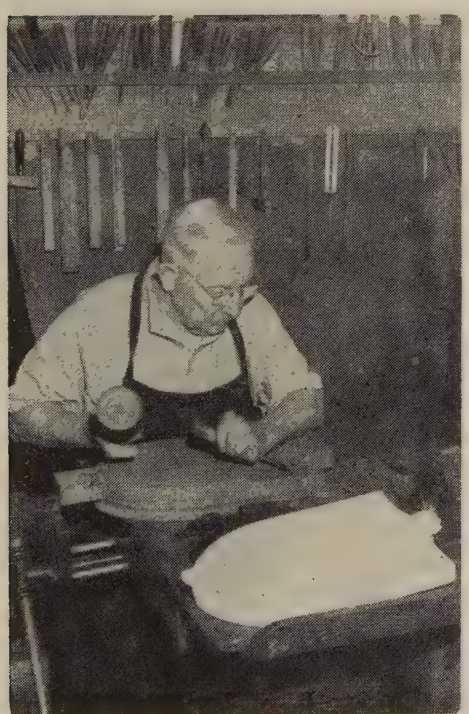
I close where I began—with evangelism. It is a challenging fact that almost all the great evangelical movements in the Church, from the earliest times, have been doctrinal. The exceptions are few, and some of these, on examination, disappear. Was not the message of St. Francis of Assisi charged with doctrine? As surely as the sun rises men will be won—if we preach the Word.

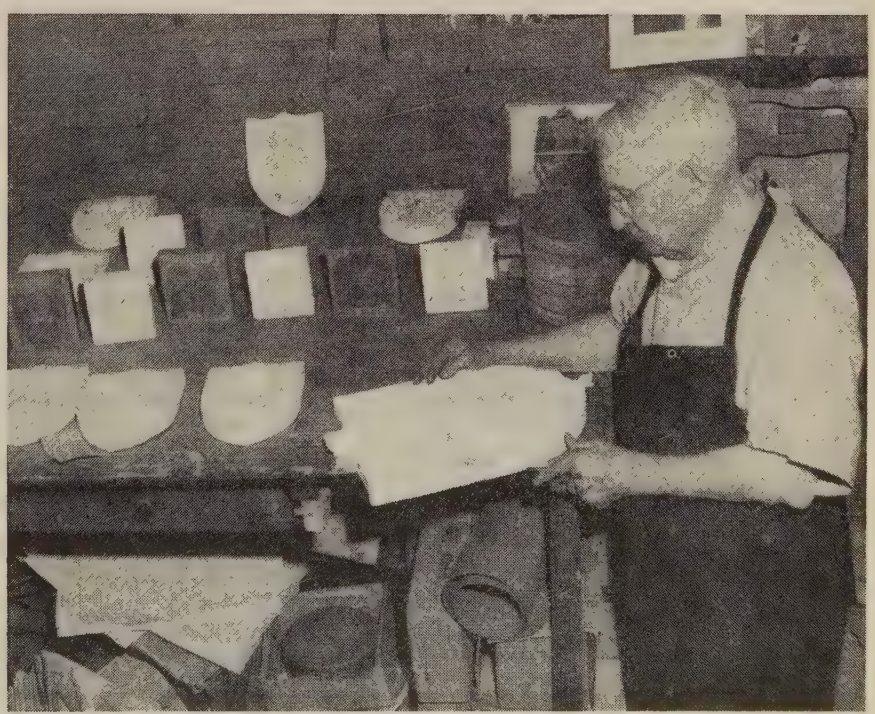
Symbolism in Walnut



In both name and physical details the Upper Room Chapel is rich in symbolism. The chancel rail, made of walnut, will have shields with the symbols of the 12 Apostles. The gate is especially interesting. At the four corners are symbolized the four evangelists, while the center figure depicts the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Agnus Dei, and the Holy Spirit.

In the circle above is the architect's sketch of the central figure in the gate. At the upper right Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of The Upper Room, confers with Dr. Puryear Mims of Vanderbilt University. Dr. Mims made the plaster casts to guide the woodcarver, who is shown below studying the casts and beginning work on the carving which appears in its finished shape on the opposite page.





THE 1953 *Week of Prayer*

JANUARY 4 TO 11

The Joint Department of Evangelism of the National Council of Churches secured Lynn J. Radcliffe, minister of the Hyde Park Community Methodist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, to prepare the booklet for the 1953 Week of Prayer, scheduled for January 4 to 11.

Dr. Radcliffe has centered the booklet around the general theme, "Seven Steps Toward Spiritual Progress." The author and the Department desire that this first week in the New Year may become "a Prayer Mission in the churches" to initiate a personal spiritual retreat in our individual lives.

The seven daily topics selected by the author are:
Sunday—"In the Beginning God"
Monday—"The Symphony of Prayer"
Tuesday—"The Art of Meditation"
Wednesday—"The Inner Cost of Prayer"
Thursday—"Christ-centered Prayer"
Friday—"Apostles of the Love of God"
Sunday—"Practicing the Presence of God"

Dr. Radcliffe has been a student of prayer for many years and has just written a book on *Making Prayer Real*. Many of his insights in this new book and many of his suggestions with reference to the practice of prayer are to be found in the "Week of Prayer" booklet, which may be obtained from the Joint Department of Evangelism of the National Council of Churches at 15¢ each, or $12.00 per 100 copies. Send all orders to

Joint Department of Evangelism
297 Fourth Avenue
New York 10, New York

The churches of any community which find it possible to unite in a fellowship of prayer during the first week of the New Year will have a rich experience in the practice of prayer.

HELPFUL MATERIALS FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER

Helpful in observing the Universal Week of Prayer are the following Tidings materials recommended here as supplementary to the program described above.

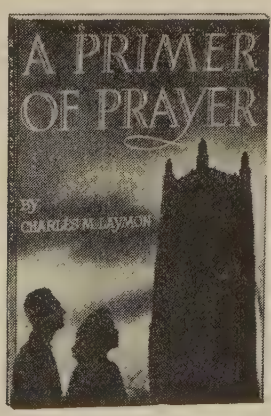
A Primer of Prayer, by Charles M. Laymon, is a 96-page book aimed at deepening the spiritual life of the average church member. Excellent for use in prayer meetings, spiritual life groups, etc., the book sells at 35¢ a copy; 12 or more copies, 25¢ each.

Some Secrets of Prayer, by Ray W. Ragsdale, is an 8-page tract pointing up various ways in which individuals can make their prayer life increasingly vital. The tract is available at $2.00 per 100.

The *Prayer Circles Card,* containing space for one's personal prayer list, suggestions on prayer, prayer scripture, prayer pledge, etc., is very popular. Stimulating to spiritual growth, the card sells at $2.00 per 100.

Too Busy for God? by Bishop Ralph S. Cushman, is a popular, 8-page tract emphasizing prayer in family life. It sells at $2.00 per 100.

All four of these items may be ordered from TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee.



To Know the Redemptive Power of God
We Must Kneel Before the Throne of Grace

A PRIMER OF PRAYER
by Charles M. Laymon

Designed to make prayer an inspiring experience in the life of the "average layman." 96 pages.

35c each; 12 or more, 25c each

TOO BUSY FOR GOD?
by Bishop Ralph S. Cushman

Emphasizes the need for sound family religion. $2.00 per 100.

TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

Have a

Festival of Faith

in your church

from New Year's to Easter

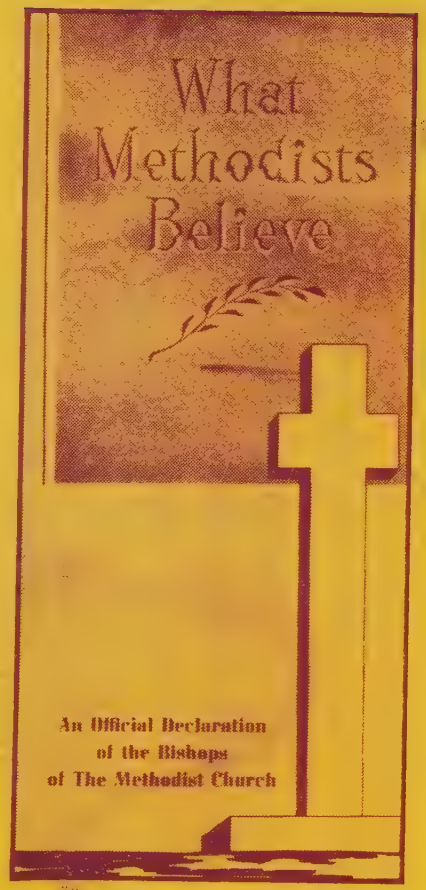
See article in this magazine on page 5

This Is a Poster

Remove these pages carefully
from this magazine.
The reverse side is a poster
for you to use in announcing

The Festival of Faith

Additional copies available from TIDINGS



This Church Is Cooperating

in the

Festival of Faith

From New Year's to Easter

As a Part of The Methodist

WORLD MISSION OF EVANGELISM
THE METHODIST CHURCH
1953

World Mission of Evangelism

WHAT METHODISTS BELIEVE

Great Doctrinal Preaching

Every Sunday

Let Every Member

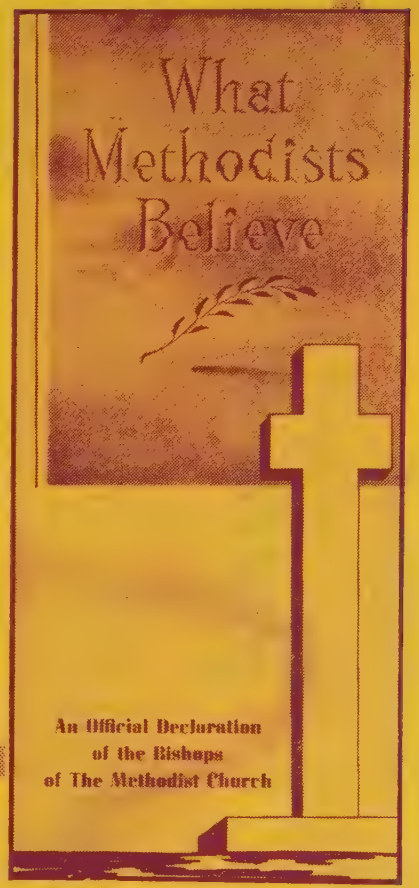
"Give God A Chance"

By Supporting The

Festival of Faith

with

Every Methodist in Church Every Week



A Protestant Festival of Faith

From New Year's to Easter the pastors and people of Methodism will observe a Festival of Faith as part of the World Mission of Evangelism. During this period the great Christian doctrines will be stressed in the pulpit and in study groups as Methodists re-examine the reason for "the faith that is in them." A major feature of this 14-week emphasis will be preaching upon the basic tenets of Christendom, and in preparation for it Methodist members will be urged to read pertinent literature concerning their beliefs. A description of this vital program appears elsewhere in this issue.

Since *Shepherds* is now received by ministers of so many other denominations, it seems fitting to propose that other Churches may wish to adapt this emphasis where it does not conflict with their own plans or programs. Therefore, we are suggesting that those pastors who may desire to do so plan now for a Protestant Festival of Faith.

Such a Festival may well begin with the Universal Week of Prayer. Participation in this nation-wide study and experience of prayer will undergird all our efforts to strengthen the faith of our people and will help to make their religion more meaningful. Also, such a prayer experience will prepare them for the serious consideration of Christian doctrines. Following is a suggested schedule for a Protestant Festival of Faith:

Date	*Theme*
Sunday, January 4	Participation in the Universal Week of Prayer
Sunday, January 11	"What Protestants Believe About God"
Sunday, January 18	"What Protestants Believe About Christ"
Sunday, January 25	"What Protestants Believe About the Holy Spirit"
Sunday, February 1	"What Protestants Believe About the Bible"
Sunday, February 8	"What Protestants Believe About Man"
Sunday, February 15	"What Protestants Believe About Salvation"
Sunday, February 22	"What Protestants Believe About the Church"
Sunday, March 1	"What Protestants Believe About the Sacraments"
Sunday, March 8	"What Protestants Believe About Christian Experience"
Sunday, March 15	"What Protestants Believe About Christian Perfection"
Sunday, March 22 (Passion Sunday)	"What Protestants Believe About the Kingdom of God"
Sunday, March 29 (Palm Sunday)	"What Protestants Believe About Divine Judgment"
Sunday, April 5 (Easter)	"What Protestants Believe About Everlasting Life"

Circuit churches may use these subjects selectively on preaching Sundays or take part in union services where these doctrines may be presented.

Helpful Materials

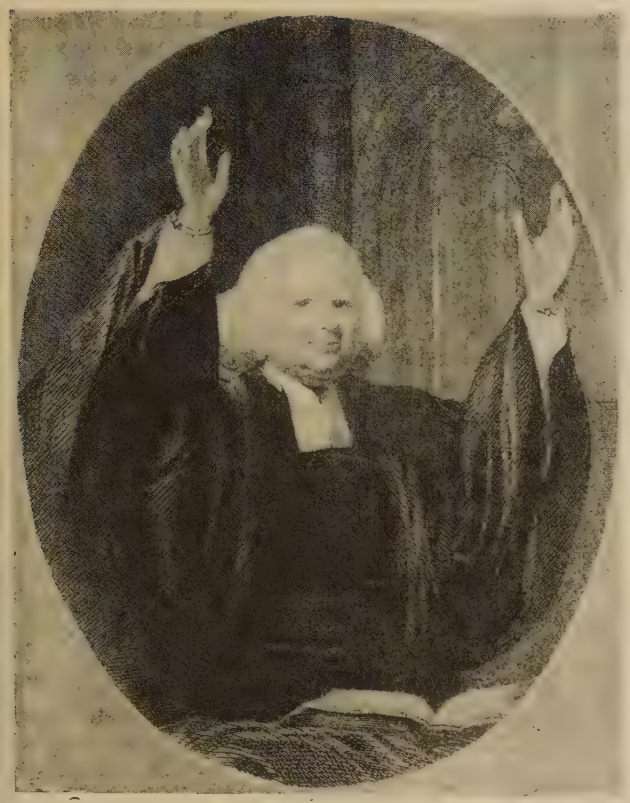
To assist pastors and people in the planning and conducting of an effective Festival of Faith, TIDINGS has available a number of excellent but inexpensive materials.

Ministers will find real inspiration and help in the Protestant Pastor's Packet, containing the 64-page book *Our Protestant Faith*, the 80-page book *The Evangelistic Message of Protestantism*, the 80-page book *Theology and Evangelism*, and the 12-page leaflet *What Every Protestant Should Know*. This packet sells for $1.00.

Available for families is the Protestant Family Envelope containing the 64-page book *A Protestant Primer*, the 64-page book *Our Protestant Faith*, and the leaflet *What Every Protestant Should Know*. The envelope, representing a 65c value, sells for 50c.

For every member there is a Protestant Member's Envelope made up of the following leaflets: *What Every Protestant Should Know*, *Why I Am a Protestant*, *Protestants Believe*, *What Is Distinctive About Protestantism?* Also included is the "My Church Attendance Record" card. This Member's Envelope sells for 10c.

The Protestant Festival of Faith offers every church an opportunity to stress the fundamentals of religion in a day when men are hungry for the gospel of salvation.



George Whitefield

Six Fruitful Years in English Evangelism

by
Cornelius Witt
Memphis, Tennessee

The period between the early weeks of the year 1739 and the closing weeks of the year 1744 includes the most important years of the Evangelical Movement. During these few years was laid the foundation of the Movement that was to arouse England from religious lethargy and save her from a counterpart of the French Revolution.

Immoral Condition of Society

For some time before Whitefield and the Wesleys began their field preaching, the general condition of English society was deplorable. Profanity, coarseness, and vulgarity characterized the court of George II. Queen Caroline, for example, though probably virtuous herself, openly jested about the profligacy of her husband. Even Robert Walpole sneered at feminine virtue. Young women, under cover of masks at masquerade balls, frequently disregarded the laws of common decency. It is said that one bold young Miss in the guise of Iphegenia attended a masquerade almost nude. Fashionable society was daily growing more lax in morals and more negligent in manners during the second quarter of the century.

Commercial prosperity seemed only to make matters worse. Not since the Middle Ages had expensive and ostentatious dressing been so prevalent as in the reign of the second George. Gaming of all kinds became so common that lottery schemes were designed to obtain money even for popular subscriptions. Ladies of the "upper set" engaged in gambling where the stakes represented small fortunes.

History does not record a period when what was called the best society in England showed less refinement, less intelligence, or less purity than at the time that Whitefield and the Wesleys entered upon their work.

If it were possible, the lower classes were in still worse condition, morally speaking, than the higher, as the grimy, brawling miners of Bristol testify.

It must not be thought, however, that there were no good people in England. In what was called the Middle Class, the standard was somewhat higher than in the other classes; and among them there was a large number of devout and pious people. Many of the preachers of the country churches lived exemplary lives, and their parishioners patterned their lives after them.

But new ideas of science and literature had changed the English mind in matters of religion and ethics. Among the so-called "Four Hundred," the works of Rousseau and Voltaire had already had deleterious effects. These effects were likewise visible in the Church; and, in their efforts to accommodate religion to new ideas of science and ethics, the preachers lost all their energy and vigor.

Pioneer Preachers of the Movement

It is impossible to picture in words the stagnated condition of English society when Whitefield and the two Wesleys started their labor of love. Whitefield was the pioneer preacher in the Movement. Being denied the pulpits of Bristol because his preaching "was tinctured with enthusiasm," he turned away from the city and sought elsewhere for a place to deliver his message. About four miles to the northeast of Bristol there was a rough tract of land which a large number of coal miners inhabited. Whitefield made his way there and, on February 17, 1739, took his stand in the open air to preach. Many of the men heard the voice of a preacher for their first time.

It must have been a happy moment for Whitefield when he saw tears "making white channels down the cheeks of black-faced men" who probably would never have heard the message of comfort had it not been for his coming.

After his first sermon Whitefield's

audience increased. Three weeks later, when he preached for the fifth time, his audience numbered 10,000. Surprised at the result of his efforts, he was encouraged to continue his open-air preaching elsewhere.

Whitefield wished to deliver his message to the unchurched thousands of London. But how was he to accomplish it? It would be too heartless and cruel to abandon this multitude to which he had been preaching.

Happily he thought of his old friend, John Wesley, who possessed gifts of organization and instruction far superior to his own. So he wrote to London urgently inviting Wesley to come and take charge of affairs at Bristol.

After some hesitation and delay, Wesley accepted the invitation. Formerly Wesley had disliked open-air preaching, but this antipathy soon left him. Thenceforth, he no longer doubted what was to be his mission in the world. He knew that he was called to be an evangelist and reformer.

There were others, of course, who were important factors in the Evangelical Movement; but George Whitefield and John and Charles Wesley were the foremost leaders. The results of Whitefield's work, however, were not permanent. He had none of the great executive ability of John Wesley; hence it was impossible for his preaching to accomplish lasting good. Whitefield was an evangelist and revivalist; Wesley, a teacher and pastor.

Wesley's Organizing Ability

Wesley's marvelous ability as a teacher and pastor was coupled with a remarkable foresight and wisdom for carrying out great plans. Seeing how neglectful of their duties the parish priests were, this great organizer undertook the work which they were leaving undone. Soon Wesley had organized numerous little bands, or "societies," which met weekly for Bible reading and prayer and to "exercise themselves to the building up of their faith and to the strengthening of themselves in the Christian hope."

In vain the parish priests and even the higher officials of the Established Church protested against such "irregularity." To their argument that he was meddling with souls that did not belong to him, Wesley replied: "God in Scripture commands me, according to my ability, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, to do it at all: seeing I have no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Hence I look on the world as my parish, and am doing the work of the Lord in whatever place I am."

Several things are to be noticed about John Wesley's preaching. His aim was to preach to those who would probably be accessible to religious influence. Whitefield preached often in the presence of Lady Huntington and other notables. Wesley almost always preached to those "unto whom the Gospel was especially welcome." Unlike the emotional appeals of Whitefield, Wesley's sermons were characterized by simple, direct language based upon principles of argument, invitation, and persuasion. He stressed the need of faith in Christ and insisted that a Christian should have the assurance that he was saved.

The Doctrine of Sanctification

Wesley never countenanced extravagance and fanaticism, but some of those who professed to be Methodists were the most violent fanatics. This fanatical tendency is especially to be noted in one particular doctrine—sanctification. By this Wesley meant merely the "complete and loving devotion of the will which issues in habitual righteousness of life." He was strenuously careful never to use the term "sinless perfection" as a synonym for it.

It was this doctrine of "sanctification" that caused a dispute between John and his brother Charles. The latter insisted that anything which could be termed "Christian perfection" must necessarily be the growth of years of faithful living. He argued that those who claimed to have attained such a spiritual state in a day or an hour were either lacking in intelligence or were dissembling. John, however, believed that many, whose sincerity he had no reason to doubt, had been brought to this state of devotion by a sudden supernatural agency.

This is not the place to enter into the merits of theological contentions. These differences have been mentioned merely to afford the reader some idea of the doctrine to which the leaders of this great religious Movement subscribed. That a Movement so widespread should be possessed of some extreme views was only natural.

The followers of Whitefield and the Wesleys denounced all forms of amusement considered worldly. It should not be forgotten, however, that the moral conditions of their day were almost unbelievable. Much of the recreation was little more refined than the cock-pit or the bull-ring. That Whitefield and the Wesleys should condemn gambling, bear-bating, bull-fighting, theatre-going, dancing, masquerade parties, and every other influence which, to them, did not seem uplifting was merely the natural characteristic of such a Movement.

But it must not be imagined that all recreations were placed under ban by even the most rigid Methodists. The higher forms of art, such as music and painting, were not only sanctioned but encouraged by most of these reformers.

Permanent Influence

The influence of the Movement, both socially and politically, can be overestimated with difficulty. In the first few years there were a number of riots and other unfortunate incidents connected with the preaching of these itinerant ministers, but many of these disturbances were frequently instigated by the parish priests themselves.

After this period of opposition the Movement began to influence English society for the better. The quiet orderly conduct of the preachers, the earnestness of their religious lives, the kindness of their nature—visiting the sick and comforting them, rejoicing with those who rejoiced and weeping with those who wept—all these things soon convinced the people that the invader of the parson's parish was a better friend than was the parson himself. Hence those who formerly opposed were soon converted into sympathizers.

Changes were also effected in politics. Under the preaching of the "Evangelical" leaders, there was developed a basic knowledge of the real value and significance of the ballot. In fact, such a healthy moral tone was acquired, and such lofty ideals of government cultivated, that the people's votes could no longer be bought by subtle politicians.

The work of these great Methodist leaders acted as a leaven upon the whole of English society. Not only were the lower orders of the social organization changed by it, but the higher classes were also influenced. Even in the universities the views of these leaders gained some foothold. Literature of the period of the Revival is full of reference to the Movement.

As a result of the Evangelical Revival every division of the social organization acquired a higher moral tone; the lower middle class found out the real value of political privilege; all classes learned the necessity of better education and religious advantages; and the nation as a whole discovered not only how to live well, but through the Methodist demand for an individual assurance of spiritual salvation, how to die well. These were the results of a Movement, the basic principles of whose foundation were laid in only six years.

Evangelism on the American Frontier

by Thomas H. Baker

Pastor, Forest Memorial Methodist Church
Forestville, Maryland

Nowhere has the evangelistic fervor of Methodism been seen more clearly than in the Great Revival which came to the American frontier during the period from 1797–1805; for along with its genius for organization and administration, the infant Methodist Church displayed an evangelical zeal that enabled it to take a leading role in the moral and spiritual development of the United States.

The Lawless West

When Methodism was seeking to claim the West, the frontier was a wild and lawless place. Pagan Indians and godless white men vied with each other in ferocity. Hard drinking and incessant gambling were the accepted social mores, and these practices often resulted in drunken orgies and sex crimes. Duelling was a common evil, and men killed each other on the slightest pretext. Irreverence and indifference bordering on atheism set a low moral and spiritual direction for the nation.

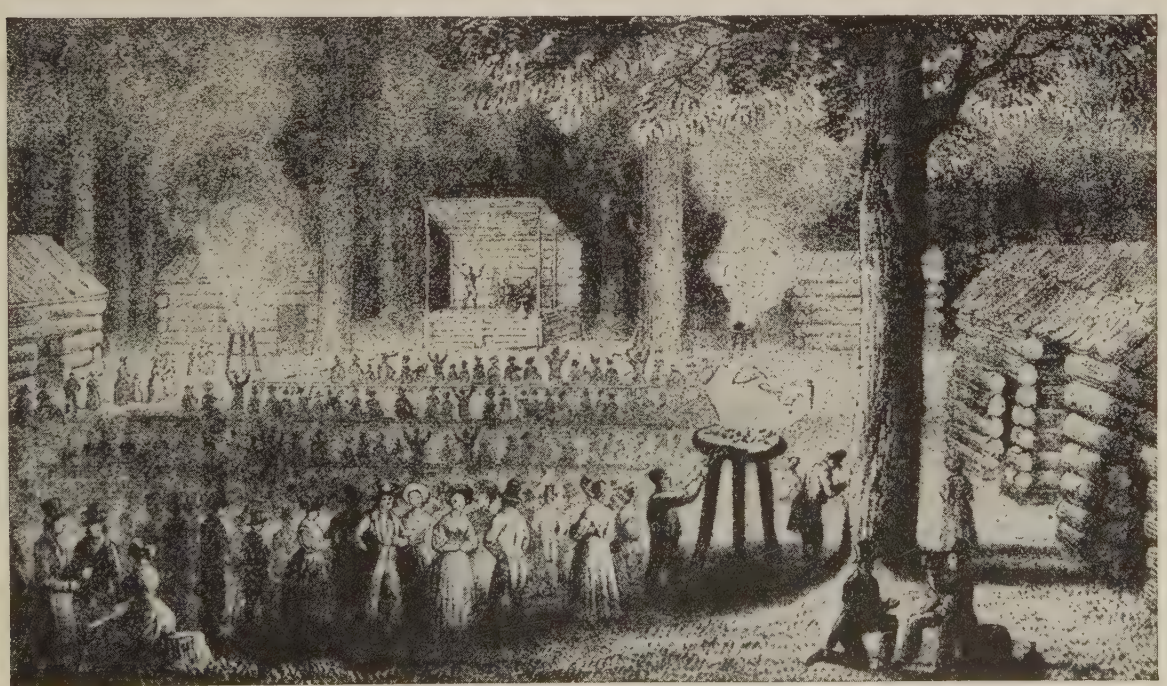
The nature of that direction is apparent in the description which Peter Cartwright gives of a typical frontier Sabbath: "Sunday was a day set apart for hunting, fishing, horse racing, card playing, balls, dances, and all kinds of jollity and mirth." It required stern men with an irrestistible passion and an invincible courage to bring such a lawless frontier face to face with its sin. Yet in 1797, the circuit-rider and the Great Revival came to this unruly wilderness to change completely the development of America's soul.

Once started, the Great Revival spread rapidly throughout the frontier, "until our country seemed all coming home to God." By 1801 this evangelistic movement had spread through Kentucky and the Carolinas and made its way especially into the Cumberland country —so named from the Cumberland River which rises in Kentucky, but sweeps through Tennessee in a wide curve at Nashville.

Rise of the Camp Meeting

The Revival found expression in the camp meeting. This was the method almost universally employed on the frontier, and without it the Revival may not have been successful. For while the circuit riders were conscientious in preaching the Word from cabin to cabin, it is highly problematical that they could have made such tremendous spiritual advance as they did if they had restricted themselves to individual dealings. With keen insight, they speedily recognized the fact that they needed to use what Halford Luccock and Paul Hutchinson have aptly described as "something dramatic, as violent toward

The First Camp Meeting Ground in Kentucky. (From Hyde) From *An Album of Methodist History*, compiled by Elmer T. Clark. Used by permission of Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.



righteousness as the rest of the border was toward license, something explosive and arresting" (*The Story of Methodism,* page 258). The camp meeting was certainly all of that, and more; for it was marked by a kind of explosiveness which was bound to impress the excitable frontier.

A site was cleared of timber, or a meadow was chosen, and the necessary buildings were erected of logs or wooden frames. These were usually covered with clapboard or shingles. A large shed was also built and covered in the same manner. Ordinarily, this shed was large enough to seat 5,000 people. A large stand was also constructed.

The people would gather at this site from 40 and 50 miles away. From 10 to 30 preachers of different denominations (mostly Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists) would preach simultaneously, day and night, for periods extending from five days to three weeks. Describing such a camp meeting, Cartwright says, "Hundreds fell like dead men under one powerful sermon, and I have seen and heard more than 500 Christians all shouting aloud the high praise of God at once."

Curious Physical Phenomena

In many instances the meetings were attended by curious physical phenomena. The first of these phenomena to be noticed in the Great Revival was the so-called "falling" exercise, in which the affected person fell to the ground. Since revivals in the East had already produced a number of the same physical reactions which occurred during the camp meetings on the frontier, this was already a familiar sight to Methodists. In fact, such reactions had become so common by 1800 that those who fell did not interfere with services except for the time required to remove them.

The first instance of "falling" occurred at a Presbyterian meeting at Gaspar River, Kentucky. In May, 1801, "falling" was almost universal among the congregation at Cabin Creek. In his book *The Kentucky Revival,* McNemar says: "To prevent their being trampled under foot . . . they were collected together and laid out in order on two squares of the meeting house; which, like so many corpses, covered a considerable part of the floor."

Those who fell would lie helpless for periods lasting from 15 minutes to 24 hours, or even longer. Some were perfectly conscious of all that took place about them. Some experienced realistic visions.

Other persons would become convulsed and lie writhing and screaming as if in pain, while still others, prostrate, would bewail their lost condition or proclaim their salvation through Christ as they urged their friends to fly to Him. Usually the pulse was weak and low, although sometimes it was higher than usual. During this experience no pain was felt, nor were injuries sustained when individuals struck obstacles in their fall. Recovering, the worshiper often arose happy in the knowledge of his salvation and exhorted his fellows to accept Christ. There were, of course, some who arose deeply dejected in soul, declaring that they had no hope of salvation.

"Falling" came to be a regular accompaniment of the Revival. Other phenomena which developed in connection with the meetings were the "jerks," dancing, trances, and visions.

Differences of opinion prevailed on the frontier regarding these physical exercises. Some doubted their efficacy. Others looked upon them as the power of God. The idea that they were the work of the Lord was firmly lodged in the minds of the superstitious. But, whatever men thought of the phenomena, none could ignore them. Dramatically, the frontiersmen were brought face to face with their sinful nature and their need "to fly from the wrath to come."

A Fiery Zeal

The fiery zeal of the Methodists made them the leaders of the Revival. In attacking evil, thy tended at times to include all non-Methodists in a common damnation. Therefore Roosevelt says in his volume, *The Winning of the West,* that even the most earnest of the leaders sometimes confused essentials and nonessentials. They hated dancing as much as they hated drunkenness and lewdness, and they denounced the wearing of jewelry with as much feeling as they anathematized murder or robbery.

However, as we view the preachers of the Great Revival, we must not overlook their courage, their magnificent devotion to duty as they saw it, and their iron will. Their splendid efforts in the face of tremendous obstacles brought morality and spirituality to the frontier. In doing this, they changed the course of American progress.

We have raised few monuments to these unknown great men. Nevertheless, their matchless devotion to the cause of justice and righteousness has done much to mold the temper and character of the United States. The loyalty of these knights-errant of God was more than mere devotion to duty; it was an overwhelming spiritual compulsion. In the *Minutes of the Methodist Conference, 1794,* we find the following succinct statement, which is typical of the fidelity of all the preachers of the Great Revival:

> Ques. Who have died this year?
>
> Ans. Henry Birchett, from Brunswick county, state of Virginia, between five and six years in the ministry; a gracious, happy, useful man, who freely offered himself for four years of service on the dangerous stations of Kentucky and Cumberland. He might have returned at the Kentucky Conference, 1793, but finding there was a probability of Cumberland being vacated by the preachers, notwithstanding the pain in his breast, and spitting of blood, the dangers of Indians, and the prevalency of the small-pox, he went a willing martyr, after taking the consent of the bishop and the conference. We hoped his life would have been preserved, but report saith, he departed in much peace at Cumberland on the western waters in February, 1794.

Vivid Imagery

With vivid imagery, the Revival preachers pronounced the doctrine of salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. Sinners could be saved only by "the blood of the Lamb." The Arminian doctrine of salvation for all, fervently preached by the Methodists, became the leading tenet of the Revival. Since this doctrine clashed with the Calvanistic tenets of predestination and regeneration, the Revival became largely a Methodist movement.

Some Major Evangelistic Needs and Opportunities

by Harry Denman

Today there are many needs and opportunities for evangelism. We have crime, corruption, and confusion. We have fears, frustrations, and phobias. We have greed, godlessness, and gambling. We have drunkenness, destruction, and death on our highways. We have war, wantonness, and waste. We have deceit, divorce, and distrust. We need to do our best creative, courageous, and Christian thinking in the field of evangelism.

Individual Contacts

1. *We need personal evangelism.* The glad news of Andrew, *"We have found the Messiah,"* should be on our lips as we speak to individuals. We need an evangelistic movement which will cause all those who know Christ to witness to those who do not know Him, whether they be relatives, neighbors, friends, or co-workers. We need "contact" evangelism, or "conversation" evangelism. Let "each one reach one" for Christ and His Kingdom.

We are making progress in organized visitation evangelism. We need to intensify this work. But we also need an unorganized personal evangelism. This should come from the glad hearts of those who have found the Christ and are anxious to go and find another person for Him. If we have found Christ, we will find others. If we know Him, we will tell others about Him.

Andrew's message was not delivered to the multitude, or to a congregation, but to one person. It must become normal and natural for Christians to speak to individuals about the power of becoming new creatures in Christ. Through the press and from the pulpit, we must urge the pew to practice personal evangelism.

2. *We need parental evangelism.* The New Testament speaks of individuals and their entire households accepting Christ. Today in America there are 51,000,000 persons under 18 years of age. What an evangelistic challenge! If America is to endure, we need parents who know Christ as their Saviour, who will teach their children about Him, and who live the Christian life in their homes. Recently a man told me that he would provide for the physical, material, and mental needs of his children but that he was expecting the Church to take care of their spiritual needs. The Church cannot do this without the help of the parents in the home. Parents must develop a holy concern for the spiritual birth of their children.

3. *We need pulpit evangelism.* What a great day this is to preach the gospel of our living Lord! The American people are determined to have a mass movement, and I am anxious for the Church to be in the vanguard. We have been surprised at the crowds which attend the regular preaching services. Many churches have two—and some have three—services on Sunday morning. Crowds pack the Sunday Mass Meetings in our United Evangelistic Missions. The sessions of the General Conference, as well as the Hour of Evangelism conducted in connection with it, were crowded by visitors who wanted to know what the Church had to say concerning the problems and needs of our day.

A Vital Message

At every service we need to lift up Christ and give the opportunity for all persons to be drawn unto Him. We need to urge individuals to yield themselves to Him.

Sunday evening affords an opportunity for a warmhearted evangelistic service.

Jesus came preaching. His message was: "Repent and believe." That is the message for this generation, which is enslaved by sin and secularism.

4. *We need public evangelism.* The newspapers are predicting that by 1960 there will be 60,000,000 television sets in the homes of the American people. What an opportunity to present the glamour of the gospel! As people sit in their homes, we can give them Christ!

Reaching All Areas

5. *We need a penetrating evangelism.* By this we mean an evangelism which penetrates all the various activities in all the areas of our lives. We need an evangelism that penetrates our economic, social, domestic, political, educational, and church life.

6. *We need power evangelism.* This will come through the daily discipline of prayer and through the reading of the Holy Scriptures and devotional books. Dr. Halford Luccock, in his book entitled *Marching Off the Map,* says that we do not need the power of Pentecost unless we have the task of Pentecost.

7. *We need a pedagogical evangelism.* Today our church school faces the great responsibility of reaching all the young adults and their children. The church school can reach more persons for Christ and the Church if we can get all the teachers and adults concerned about reaching children, youth, and young adults.

8. *We need a people's evangelism.* "The fields are white unto the harvest." Everywhere there are communities which need church schools and churches. We must reach all peoples. We must reach not only the favored few but also the unfavored masses. We must not neglect one class but reach all classes of society. Dr. Luccock, in the booklet, *The First Careless Rapture,* has said, *"We must reach out or pass out."*

More and more we must see that evangelism is a primary activity for the pew and not for the pulpit. The function

of the pulpit is to inspire, to teach, to lead, and to work with the pew in the great task of evangelism. Through the secular press a preacher testified that his church was able to secure more than 800 members this year due to the monthly evangelistic activity of his laymen. Methodism spread to South Africa, Australia, and the United States because of the witnessing of immigrants and soldiers.

In his sermons at the Nebraska Annual Conference, Bishop Gerald Kennedy helped me greatly when he said that "there is no permanent victory" and that "victory is an impostor." We must not depend on the victories of the United Evangelistic Missions. We must go on from victory to victory. The bishop stated that we need an idea which is too big for us; then God helps us. He stated further that the supreme blasphemy is the claim that "a man is hopeless." Such a claim means that we do not believe in God. Certainly, America is not hopeless. God can save America if we will let Him.

Weeps for People

One day not long ago I visited with a young preacher from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. The next day we were at it again. We went to see the hard ones. This young preacher had been working with them for two years. He loved them. He was concerned. We spent 30 minutes with one man as we tried to help him start the Christian life. He refused our invitations. As we left the home, I noticed, out of the corner of my eye, that this young preacher was shedding some tears. He was brokenhearted. We did not talk about it, but I saw a preacher weep over the unconverted of his community! This was both a lesson and a reproach to me. We need to be so concerned that we are brokenhearted, even as Jesus was brokenhearted when He brooded over Jerusalem.

During 1953

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in the

World Wide Mission of Evangelism

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Start the New Year with the January Tract

The Christian Commitment

by Aubrey G. Walton

This timely and persuasive leaflet describes the meaning and nature of Christian dedication and effectively appeals for personal decisions. Should be given to every member and prospective member. Excellent to distribute at your services or to enclose in your correspondence.

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TIDINGS

1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 5, Tenn.

OUR NEW SIXTH CITY

America's sixth city in population is neither Baltimore nor Cleveland. It is a "city on wheels." About 1,850,000 Americans, we are told, now live in approximately 740,000 trailers. Since the war, the mobile home business has boomed to such extent that trailer camps are familiar landmarks in nearly every section of the country. And, as we might expect, a growing interest in trailer life is being shown on the part of those who find their towns and cities surrounded by these new community centers.

Thus, national magazines are beginning to provide informative articles on the economic, educational, and social aspects of mobile living. We are told, for example, that trailers answer the need for emergency housing. They are ideal for defense workers and those who must follow construction jobs.. Moreover, in many respects they offer healthy living conditions in that they permit families to follow the seasons and choose the best climate. Also, as the trailer salesman will tell you, the worker can go where the best money is.

Nor does the worker need to be ashamed of living in a trailer, since these mobile homes cost as much as, or more than, many permanent houses. He can have all the necessities and luxuries that anyone else enjoys; and often he will have more. Trailer life is the coming thing, we are told. In fact, the mobile population is growing at a rate of 175,000 a year.

All of this is certainly very interesting, we say, but what does it mean to the Christian churches of America? Can a great social movement like this take place without some aspects of the change affecting our churches?

This article is concerned with the fact that the churches must acknowledge the trend, that they must decide how to meet the new situation, and that they must do it quickly.

A Responsibility and a Challenge

No one would suggest that the churches ought not to serve America's fifth city, or her seventh. What, then, about her sixth? These cities on wheels have no churches of their own. In most cases, they are not large enough to support a full-time ministry. Thus, a responsibility and a challenge are placed before every church located in an area in which trailer camps are situated. To be sure, many local residents will not want to share their churches with these outsiders who may be here today and gone tomorrow. These same people frequently object to the trailer children in schools so long as their parents do not carry part of the tax burden. The fact remains, however, that if the members of local churches do not accept the trailerites into their fellowship, these nomads in our midst will be denied the fellowship they need. Surely, the Christian faith, which insists that the message of Jesus is meant for each of us regardless of his station in life, know no boundaries between these village newcomers and the old-timers. Perhaps church members would not be so reluctant to include these mobile home owners in their activities if they understood them better.

by Alan J. Davis
The Methodist Church
Kensington, Connecticut

One observer has described these people as proud of spirit, tough of body, hungry for money. Whether or not this appraisal is correct, we are still faced with some vital questions. What happens to the Christian virtues of service to others, stewardship of possessions, and the love and praise of God, when generations of Americans are permitted to grow up without the stabilizing influence of church fellowship? What happens to family life when it has no roots in a community? What happens to Christian education when the children move too often to get started in a Sunday school? What happens to the basic human needs of feeling wanted and useful, of being able to help missionary enterprises around the world, of learning to depend on a strength, a power, and a love greater than oneself? What happens when tragedies of illness and death strike and there is no clergyman on hand to share the burden of bewilderment and grief?

To be sure, all of our cities and towns contain other families that lack these same things. But at least, in such cases, there are churches ready and trying to reach these people in their need. The same can scarcely be said for this vast, unwieldly city on wheels.

Way to Meet the Challenge

So let Christian people everywhere determine to seek out these new communities in their midst and strive to bring the witness of Jesus Christ to all men. Here are some suggestions for those who can see in America's new sixth city a challenge and a job.

1. The role of the local church in society today must be adaptable to

changing needs. Members must first understand that their church has a mission to all people.

2. A community survey should be made to determine areas of social concern. Racial prejudice, gambling, slum housing, and political corruption might be a part of the picture as well as the problem of the trailer camp. The church should study these needs in the light of how it may strengthen its witness.

3. The church should appoint a standing committee authorized to undertake specific action in redeeming these "trouble spots" in the community. In the case of the trailer camp, the committee should first ascertain whether or not the camp meets the health standards of the city. Are the educational facilities adequate? Are the owners and operators of the camps cooperative in providing necessary facilities? If the answers to these questions are negative, social pressure must be used to help the city officials and other responsible people come to see that this is a problem with which they must deal.

Religious Census

4. An interdenominational religious census should be made of the trailerites. Information concerning religious preference, the number and ages of children, and the intended length of stay in the community is essential to the planning of any over-all program.

5. A survey of the church's facilities should then be made to determine the extent of its ability to serve these people. Can its Sunday school expand to admit the additional children? Is there a transportation problem involved? Should a special vacation church school be held in the trailer area itself?

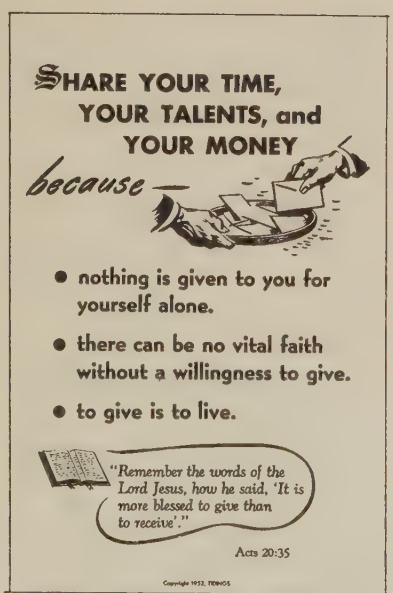
6. Finally teams of visitors from the church should visit the families to tell them about their church and to invite them to attend its services. If there is no response on the part of the trailerites, it should be remembered that they may be justifiably suspicious of any sudden interest shown in them. It may take some time before they feel sufficiently welcome to venture outside their own camp.

Some Existent Dangers

Church people must realize that there are several very real dangers to be faced in trying to bring the church and the trailer camp together. For instance, the church people must not look upon the trailerites simply as strange creatures who need their help. The trailer families must be treated as individuals, just as the church members would treat their own neighbors. For this reason it would seem advisable to use the existing committees of the church whenever possible in dealing with this special situation. A "committee for the advancement and protection of blighted trailerites" would hardly promote a healthy relationship. Rather, the regular facilities of the church school should be used. The holding of a vacation school should be handled by the Board of Education of the local church, and personal contacts should be made through the existing Commission on Membership and Evangelism rather than through a special group.

For these reasons, it is best that one church, rather than a group of churches, deal with the trailerites after the initial survey is taken. If the program is an interdenominational cooperative effort, it might easily deteriorate into a plan for doing something for the "needy" rather than constitute a sincere program of work with the people in an attempt to assimilate them into a church fellowship. Only in this latter way, however, can the church be an effective link between the town and the camp and thus be an integrative factor in society.

Surely, the church does have a responsibility to all people. It cannot ignore the social "trouble spots" that exist in its neighborhood, for it must always bear Christian witness to men in all conditions. Thus, it is the local church which must aid in the redemptive work that needs to be done in America's sixth city—the city on wheels. If these endeavors are successful the local church will be much stronger, the community will be relieved of one of its potential "trouble spots," and the trailerites themselves will have new opportunities for enriched living. The task is not easy, but a Christian church and its people can do no less than honestly, prayerfully, and courageously seek God's will in performing it.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Acts 20:35

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TIDINGS

1908 Grand Ave. Nashville 5, Tenn.

A Charge to Keep

by J. C. Madison

Pastor, Central Methodist, Concord, North Carolina

The Fourth Quarterly Conference was in session. The chairman of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism distributed some sheets of paper on which were mimeographed 52 names. "We do not know," he explained, "who these members are, or where they live. Information that will help us to locate any one of them will be appreciated."

Immediately another member of the Quarterly Conference arose to question the wisdom of keeping so much "dead wood" on the church rolls. "I will offer a motion that these names be dropped," he continued. The motion was immediately seconded. "What does the pastor think about it?" someone asked. "Well," the minister admitted, "the rolls do need cleaning up." The question was called and, by a vote of the Quarterly Conference, 52 names were struck from the rolls of the church. In a matter of seconds, 52 people who had stood before the altar and solemnly pledged their allegiance to Christ and His Church no longer were members.

The minister was a little concerned about his report to the Annual Conference. But these were not really his losses, he reasoned with himself. In fact, he didn't know a single person in the group involved. These were, he told himself, the cumulative losses of a decade or more. However correct his reasoning may have been, the fact remains that 52 people had been lost from the fellowship of the church.

How Many Are Lost?

So far as I know there are no dependable statistics to indicate precisely how many people are lost from the church each year. If such facts were known, I have a feeling that the figures would be startling. Practically every church carries upon its rolls a large list of inactive members, about many of whom nothing is known. On almost every street there live a few people whom someone has called "alumni Christians." That is to say, these people were at one time active in the church, perhaps as teachers in the Sunday school, perhaps as stewards, but now they have no church connection at all.

A few years ago, while I was taking a bus trip to Chicago, I chanced to meet three men whom I cannot forget. One was a banker; one was a college professor; and the third was a retired railroad executive. Each told me that at one time he had been a steward in some Methodist church. Now one of them was a member of another denomination; one had united with a Theosophist group; while the third had completely lost interest in religion.

To my mind, no condition suggests the spiritual poverty of some churches quite so much as this. Is our church among those to which men can say, "Physician, heal thyself!"? Certainly, the incident behooves all of our churches to take an inventory of their resources. We cannot evade the question. What does my church have to offer not only to attract but also to hold those who come under its influence?

Let us simplify the problem by breaking it down into a few questions still more poignant.

A Vital Fellowship

To begin with, does my church have an appealing fellowship? The lonely man in the street, the forgotten child, the mother plagued with many irritating problems in the home, the businessman tried by all the temptations that beset him as he joins in the scramble for profits in the keenly competitive market place—each is a personality hungering for the warmth of genuine friendliness. Now, the church may provide that atmosphere of warm friendliness, or it may not. Where it provides such friendship people will be there. Only a carcass will hang in a refrigerator very long without protest.

In a society like ours, broken up as it is by all the barriers separating people into different and sometimes hostile groups, the church has perhaps no greater task than that of creating a brotherly fellowship. This task is urgent, both for the sake of the individual, who craves a sense of belonging, and for the sake of society, which can be saved from the destructive forces of disintegration only by the counter forces of good will, love, and Christian concern. Nothing can be more disastrous for a church than to have its leadership lose sight of the individual and come to think of people en masse. Surely, a church is one place where every personality should be regarded as of infinite worth. Every church must be such a place if it is to be consistent with the gospel it proclaims.

Thus we ask of the women's organization, of the Bible class, of the men's group, of the church as a whole: Do you have a fellowship to which a person may come—whether he is rich or poor, learned or unlettered—and want to come back?

To create such a fellowship is not simply the responsibility of the teacher or the preacher. It is the task of every member of the congregation. If any stranger comes to a Sunday service and leaves feeling that he would have preferred to spend the morning in a morgue, you may be certain that he will not come back to that church. In the loss of that person every member of the congregation stands condemned.

Need for a Program

A second question which every member may well ask is this: Does my church have a program that challenges? Many people are found on the inactive list for the simple reason that they have never had a chance to be otherwise. They have never been given a significant task to do in the church.

Men and women who are concerned for the perilous plight of our world are constantly turning to the Church for guidance. They desperately want to do something to affect the issues which determine the destiny of our civilization. Is our church addressing itself to such issues? Does our church offer a medium

for the expression of such a noble concern?

We do not need to be reminded that we are living in a world at war. Race prejudice and discrimination continue to give the lie to democratic ideals and to the Christian brotherhood which we profess. Does our church have anything positive to say about these issues? Surely, the eternal God has something He wants said. It is the business of our church to say it.

A Saving Doctrine

The last question I would ask is this: Does my church proclaim a Christ who saves? Dr. Roy L. Smith tells the story of a prominent newspaper editor who used his paper's columns to urge atheism upon his readers. One day the editor received a letter written by a man who recited some hard and bitter facts. The letter ended with the statement: "I need help, and I am wondering if atheism will give me courage, character, and confidence."

On every hand we face frustrated and broken lives. Can we show them the way to the Christ who saves? By that I do not mean: Can we give them a lecture on good morals? Our gospel of grace and forgiveness is far more than that. "Any Gospel," says Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, "that just says to a man, 'Try hard,' is no gospel at all. Our gospel is for all . . . who have no will power."

In all fairness, of course, we must recognize the fact that there are always some who are not willing to pay the price of salvation. The Rich Young Ruler came to Jesus, but he went away sorrowfully when he heard the requirement: "Sell all you have and give to the poor. Take up your cross and follow me." He was not willing to sacrifice.

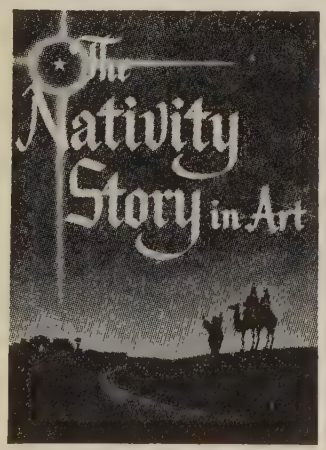
No doubt many persons leave the fellowship of the Church today primarily because they are not willing to submit to the discipline of Christian living. But we who constitute the leadership of the Church dare not let that fact make us indifferent to our responsibility.

A Divine Commission

There is an old story of Dwight L. Moody's that tells of a man who was sitting in the shade of a tree while his little golden-haired girl played in the meadow before him. The day was warm, and the man was tired. He dropped off to sleep. After a while he awoke to find that the child was nowhere in sight. He began to search frantically. At length he found her little body crumpled up in the bottom of a ravine into which she had fallen. Is that a parable of our church? While we are busy at many things—good things, no doubt—or perhaps even while we are asleep, are boys and girls and men and women drifting away to become lost?

When we come to a Quarterly Conference and hear the name of some unknown person we are brought face to face with a grave responsibility. By a simple vote of the Conference, we may, of course, take the name from the rolls. But while the vote may be simple, in reality we are admitting that we have failed in the great responsibility with which we have been entrusted.

We have a charge *to keep* as well as a commission *to win*. May God help us to be able to say with Christ in His intercessory prayer, "I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost. . . ."



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TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

The Youth Emphasis

THE METHODIST CHURCH
1952–1956

In order that youth's needs may be met in these days of growing secularism, immorality, and mobilization, the church must give special attention to youth and the church's program for them. To equip Methodist youth to live in this world of strange and powerful pressures, it is necessary to help youth lay hold of the transforming power of God; to meet the world's pagan forces with Christian conviction and action; to capture young people everywhere with the message of Christ; to work for a dynamic Christian fellowship in the local and world community; to prepare for the task through vocation, through churchmanship, and through service in the community.

THIS IS THE EMPHASIS!

The purpose of the emphasis is to arouse the church to help all youth discover the will of God and live by it.

LET US THEREFORE . . .

STRENGTHEN FAITH

Study Christian beliefs
Study Methodist beliefs
Study the Bible
Study and practice prayer

WIN YOUTH TO CHRIST

Find unchurched youth
Enroll youth in the Methodist Youth Fellowship
Lead them to commitment
Help them to witness

IMPROVE THE MYF

Enlist and train workers with youth
Plan a better MYF program for all age groups
Develop Christian social action
Establish new MYF's

This Youth Emphasis was called for by the 1952 General Conference.

•

Shepherds is interested in the total work of Christian young people—especially the youth evangelism emphasis—and urges that pastors and Commissions on Membership and Evangelism in the local church cooperate with and help the youth program in every possible way. In fact, the chairman of the Christian Witness Commission of the MYF is a member of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism.

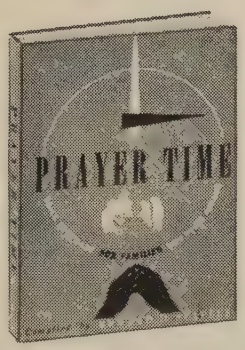
The General Boards of Evangelism and Education have recently established a Cooperative Department of Youth Evangelism for purposes of cooperation in this field. Howard W. Ellis is the Director of this Cooperative Department.

For further information about the general and over-all aspects of the Youth Emphasis in The Methodist Church, write the Youth Department of the General Board of Education, P.O. Box 871, Nashville 2, Tennessee. For further information concerning the evangelistic emphasis write Howard W. Ellis, Cooperative Department of Youth Evangelism, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee.

Prayer Time

A Book of Devotions for Families with Young Children

Compiled by Edward D. Staples



To provide family worship suggestions and materials that will make the experience of family worship real and vital to the younger members of the family is the objective of this book. The devotions have been gathered from scores of experienced writers in the field of children's work. The writers come from various denominations where they are teachers, preachers, parents, and leaders in work with young children. The editor, Edward D. Staples, is Director of the Department of the Christian Family, Methodist Board of Education.

Parents of younger children will welcome this book with its more than two hundred suggested devotions. Twelve general headings help the parents find material needed for the particular day.

THE CONTENTS

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Learning to Do Right
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Love
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THE UPPER ROOM

1908 Grand Ave. **Nashville 5, Tenn.**

The Challenge of the Silent Pulpits

By Edward G. Mackay
Superintendent, Decatur-Oxford District
North Georgia Conference

What is The Methodist Church going to do in this new quadrennium about its silent pulpits? This is a disturbing question when we realize that on any given Sunday approximately one-third of the congregations of our Church in the United States have no service of worship. Truly, to quote Milton, "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

Those of us who have served city churches have often been exhorted to have a seven-day program each week: something going on at the church every evening, with never a darkened, gloomy looking church on the busy city thoroughfare. But what of the country church, or the one in the little village? Often there is just one service a month, or one Sunday with two services. Can churches live and grow on such a meager spiritual diet?

I am a District Superintendent with 86 congregations and 40 pastors. As I moved about my District I became increasingly disturbed by the thought that with 40 pastors and 86 preaching places there were 46 silent pulpits every Sunday morning, except for a few cases where a pastor preached at one church at 9:30 and hastened to another church for an 11:00 o'clock service.

A Close-up

This picture of one district is just a close-up of the larger situation. In my own Conference we have 387 charges served by regular pastors and accepted supplies. The total number of preaching places is 828. This means that in one Conference alone there are, on any given Sunday, 441 silent pulpits.

A glance at the statistics for the entire Church, as furnished by Albert C. Hoover of the Statistical Office, reveals a somewhat startling situation. We have, in all, 39,961 congregations, or preaching places, in the 22,471 pastoral charges of our Church. These charges are served by 15,035 regular ministers and 7,436 supplies. Thus we have a total of 22,471 preachers serving 39,961 congregations, figures which reveal that every Sunday we have 17,490 silent pulpits. This total is modified somewhat because some circuit preachers "stagger" their monthly schedule of services; but even with this allowance one may safely say that at least 15,000 of our small churches have no service of worship, morning or evening, on any given Sunday. Surely this is a grave condition calling for study and action. Shall we "open the doors of the temple" or go on living "at this poor dying rate"?

Those of us who were present at the General Conference heard a message from a lay preacher of British Methodism. He was one of some 30,000 laymen who supplement the work of 4,000 British preachers by filling the vacant pulpits every Sunday as volunteers with no financial reward. It was stated that three out of every five services in English Methodism are conducted by laymen.

To the First Decades

This practice dates back to the first decades of the church and was inaugurated by John Wesley himself. In the recent volume, *The Methodist Heritage*, there is a section dealing with the ministry of the laity. The author declares: "It placed responsibility for Christian witness and instruction on the lay Christian. It recognized, in so doing, the universal priesthood of believers, and strengthened the prophetic testimony of a Christian community."

It is significant that in the Deed of Union in 1932, drawn up when unification of the three divisions of Methodism in England was achieved, this statement occurs: "Christ's ministers in the Church are stewards in the household of God and shepherds of His flock. Some are called and ordained to this sole occupation and have a principal and directing part in these great duties, but they hold no priesthood differing in kind from that which is common to the Lord's people, and they have no exclusive title to the preaching of the gospel or the care of souls. These ministries are shared with them by others to whom also the Spirit divides His gifts" (*The Methodist Heritage*, page 236). This recognizes the place of lay preaching as a continual and essential part of English Methodism. Is it not time for us to develop a lay ministry for American Methodism?

Fortunately we have the necessary provision for this in our own polity, a

new feature first enacted by the General Conference of 1948 and continued in 1952. In section four, paragraph 150 of the 1948 *Discipline,* the quarterly conference is authorized to "certify proper persons to serve as lay speakers, and inquire annually into the gifts, labors and usefulness of lay speakers on the circuit, station, or mission. Lay speakers shall be constituted by the Official Board or Board of Stewards of the church of which they are members, and certified by the Quarterly Conference. . . . The duties of a lay speaker are to conduct services of worship; to hold meetings for prayer and exhortation whenever opportunity is afforded, subject to the direction of the pastor; to attend all sessions of the District and Quarterly Conferences; and to present a written report to the same. A lay speaker shall be subject to an annual examination of character in the Quarterly Conference, and a renewal of certificate, to be signed by the president thereof."

Here is a wise provision, the use of which can be made the means of solving the problem of the silent pulpits. Our laymen usually shrink from becoming local preachers because the very term confuses their status as laymen. To the average layman there is a semi-professional meaning to the term "local preacher," especially since most of our local preachers are young men on their way to becoming regular ministers. But "lay speaker" is a term which accurately describes the layman who is willing and able to speak to a congregation about Christ and His Kingdom. The old term, "exhorter," has largely lost its meaning, and in large sections of our Church we have no licensed exhorters.

A Tide Begun

Again, the use of lay speakers fits admirably into a significant trend notable in our Church and in other denominations. Visitation evangelism has tapped the lay resources of our membership with marvelous results. Even the Anglican Church, struggling to overcome widespread public apathy in church attendance and activity, has begun to train its laymen somewhat in the pattern of English Methodism. In the affairs of the Church there is, indeed, a tide which, taken at the flood, can speed the needed revival in this secular age.

In my own District we have made a modest beginning in filling the silent pulpits. We are gradually increasing the number of services on the circuits, especially on Sunday mornings. Our final aim is to have a morning service in every church, except in a few cases where it has been the custom for denominations to share the Sundays of the month. We are recruiting lay speakers, and expect to have a sufficient number to meet every call without using any layman so often that his own church would suffer. Local preachers, of course, are used where available. Women, as well as men, can be lay speakers. Adult classes and Methodist Men's Clubs can assist with transportation and an accompanying delegation to bring encouragement or to give special music.

Critical Problem

The country church represents a critical problem for Methodism. It needs encouragement. Added services with the use of lay speakers is at least part of the answer. If they can do it in England we can do it in America. It seems to me that our Board of Evangelism could give effective leadership to this movement. It should be a gradual process, taking, perhaps, one or two quadrenniums to complete.

The land lies fair before us, and we are well able to possess it. We have the resources to make vocal all these silent pulpits. Such an effort would strengthen the small rural church and ultimately furnish all our people services of worship on every Lord's day. By doing this, we would be reinstating a practice which was a major factor in the success of early Methodism.

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1908 Grand Avenue **TIDINGS** Nashville 5, Tennessee

Charge-Wide Tent Revival

--in Four Rural Churches

by C. Ross Freeman, Woodstock, Georgia

Afraid that the stock car races on Friday night of the charge-wide Tent Revival in Orange County, Virginia, would interfere with the attendance, one of the stewards apologized to the pastor, L. E. Whitley.

"We've got competition tonight," the steward said.

"No, sir," the pastor answered with enthusiasm, "*We* haven't got competition. *They* have."

And the pastor was right. For the tent was practically full again that evening.

Here was tangible evidence of the popular appeal of the united revival effort. It completely vindicated the faith of the pastor and the officials of the Orange County circuit in planning for the meeting.

Heretofore the four churches—Bethlehem, Ellisville, Palmyra, and Salem—had engaged in five-day revival efforts that had done little to keep the spiritual tone alive or to strengthen the church. Congregations had not been large, the singing had been dull and uninspired, and very little good had come out of the expenditure of time and energy. Many members were discouraged about revivals.

Discussing the problem one night with the official board, the pastor pointed out that the charge had been spending from $200.00 to $250.00 and devoting four weeks a year to feeble and half-hearted evangelistic meetings.

Use Combined Resources

"Why not major on one united evangelistic campaign for two weeks?" he asked. "We could pool our revival money, use our combined resources, bring in an outstanding successful evangelist to preach for us, and see what could be done this way. We're not accomplishing anything for God by using the traditional method."

Instantly wary of this departure from precedent, the cautious board parried with the question, "Where would we have it?"

Setting for successful services

The alert pastor replied, "Why not use a tent located as near to the geographic center of the charge as possible so that everyone would have about the same distance to drive? Our charge is sufficiently compact for all our members to attend such a meeting. And many people who would not go inside a church can probably be persuaded to attend services in the informal atmosphere of a tent. After all, they are the ones we are seeking."

Against such persuasive argument the board had little to say. Fortunately, the Virginia Conference had just purchased a tent. It was ideal for the purpose, and arrangements were made to use it on the Orange County circuit. Committees for publicity, finances, entertainment, property, and other essential phases of the program were appointed well in advance. Thus, every detail was in the hands of some committee. The entire charge went enthusiastically to work planning and preparing for one of the greatest ventures they had undertaken.

Services were planned to begin at 8:00 o'clock on Labor Day, September 1, 1952. As the hour approached, everything was in readiness, and everybody was a little anxious. Had they ventured too far? Would the response justify all their planning and preparation?

Even the most skeptical were convinced as the crowds began to pour into the tent. The last doubts were dispelled by the enthusiastic singing and the comments after the service.

In his opening remarks the pastor announced, "Many prayers have gone into this effort—prayers with legs on them! The men who secured the lot, went after the tent, labored all day Saturday to put it up, built the seats, and stayed until the last detail was ready, were praying for the success of this venture. The fact that everything is ready indicates the fine spirit of cooperation and enthusiasm. God will answer such obviously sincere prayers."

Catching the spirit of the people, the county paper and radio station gave wholehearted support to the campaign. They made their facilities and personnel available to help in whatever way the committee thought beneficial.

Wide Attendance

From the first service many people attended who never would have felt comfortable in a church. An unwed mother, bringing her two children, wept openly night after night until God's peace and forgiveness lightened the burden of her troubled conscience. A large family which was completely outside the church followed the father night after night into the tent.

Alcoholics with whom the pastor had been working for three years came willingly to the tent to hear the promises of God.

A poor deaf boy who had never had a chance was thrilled when the pastor asked him to help erect the tent. The boy worked hard. Having invested time and labor, he felt that he ought to attend the first service even though he probably would not be able to hear a thing. Captivated by the spirit of the service, he volunteered to look after the lights and to ready the tent every night. He was granted permission to do this, and night after night he went to the tent an hour in advance of the service to

turn on the lights and to see if everything was in proper order. He was always the last person to leave, since he keenly felt his responsibility for turning off the lights and closing up for the night. In addition, he was on hand every evening to greet early comers. His contagious smile was a real benediction to the service.

Men and women who had been loyal church people for years, and who had carried on the activities of the church, became concerned about their personal relationship to God. Many of these struggled through respectability and reputation to clear-cut decisions and experiences. One of their number spoke for all of this group when he said, "I must be sure about my relation to God. Pray for me."

The services made a tremendous impact upon the religious life of the community. The revival was the subject of conversation in the homes, on the street corners, in the places of business, and along the highways. The Christian Disciples Church in the community, impressed by the power and magnitude of the services, did an unprecedented thing in calling off its Sunday evening service and attending our meeting in a body.

Plan Another Revival

Leaders of the four churches on the Orange County circuit were scarcely able to conceal their joy. Thrilled that they had caught the vision and led in planning a spiritually profitable enterprise for God, they immediately began talking about another charge-wide tent meeting next year.

"This is another step in the development of an effective charge-wide program, cooperative activity, and a warm-hearted spirit of evangelism," the pastor stated.

The emphasis in this revival was placed not so much upon a "drive for membership" as upon a re-examination of the principles for which we labor and the stand which we must take for Christ and His Church. We stressed the rededication of Christians to a higher plane of Christian life in testimony of the power and grace characteristic of those who believe and practice what Christ taught.

This revival certainly accomplished all of that, and more; for, with the development of a new spirit throughout the membership, new people are now coming to join the various churches of this charge. We believe that this influx is the immediate result of the high type of soul searching occasioned by the strong evangelistic preaching prevailing throughout the two weeks. Many persons were brought to their knees in earnest prayer as a result of the messages.

We praise God for the mighty works which He has manifested to us in this revival.

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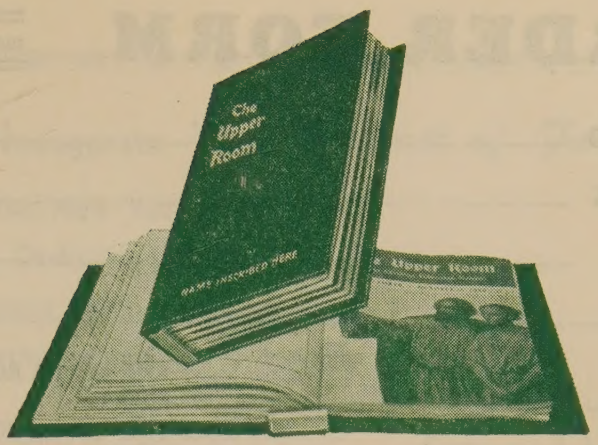

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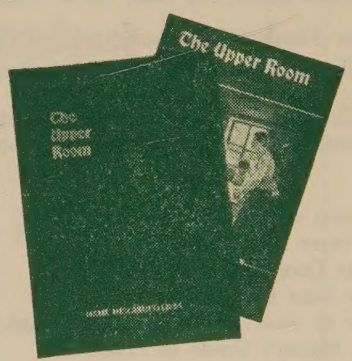

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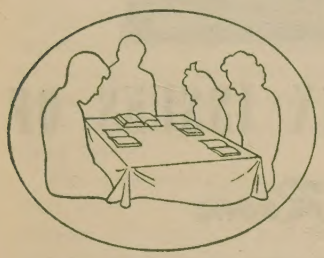

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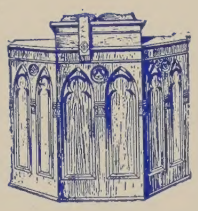

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